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JOHN A LASCO.

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JOHN A LASCO:

HIS EARLIER LIFE AND LABOURS.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION
IN POLAND, GERMANY, AND ENGLAND.

BY

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St. Petersburg,

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Translated from the German

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

BUT few words of introduction are necessary in presenting the following pages to the English reader. The aim of the learned author has not been to furnish a history of the Reformation, dealing mainly with names and dates, such as would be appropriate to a manual of Church history, but rather to exhibit the secret motives and springs of action which impelled the friends and foes of the evangelic movement at its most critical period. For the decades over which A Lasco's reforming activity extends mark the time of transition from the days of youthful conquest on the part of the Reformation to those sad years of divisions and declension which followed.

Some of the matters recorded in this volume have only an historic interest for us in the present day. Many differences that stirred the hearts of men in those days are now happily consigned to oblivion among evangelical Christians. Many other questions, however, which were then raised are still urgently pressing for solution, and foremost among these that as to the blending of the greatest amount of Christian freedom with a spiritual discipline in accordance with the Word of God. On this subject in particular the example of A Lasco has still much to teach.

From a purely literary point of view, it might appear a disadvantage that the book has been composed little by little, at such intervals of leisure as could be secured amidst

the absorbing engagements of a large city church. This disadvantage, however, is greatly outweighed by the consideration that the writer has, during more than a quarter of a century, given practical exemplification to the principles laid down by A Lasco, and that his congregation is perhaps second to none as respects Scriptural order and the works of evangelisation and benevolence.

In the English edition some omissions have necessarily been made, more particularly as concerns the evidences on which our author's conclusions rest. On the other hand, a few extra notes have been added, and the year of death has been given in connection with many names in the Index. The last page and a half of the text was likewise appended by the translator, by way of explaining how Dr. Dalton's history is here brought somewhat abruptly to a close.

Those who would trace the influence of A Lasco's Church Order upon the liturgical writings of the Church of the Netherlands may profitably consult the translation of Dalton's work made by Rev. P. C. van Oosterzee, of Enschede, Holland (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon), where, moreover, the Latin text is in many places compared with the old Dutch reading as given in Kuyper.

May this volume go forth on its way, and be blessed to the promotion of that oneness in the truth for which A Lasco himself so earnestly laboured.

M. J. E.

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I.

*JOHN A LASCO AS A CATHOLIC IN
HIS NATIVE LAND.*

I.

LAND AND PEOPLE OF HIS HOME.

A WIDE and painful distance now separates the land and people of our hero from the time in which he was himself living among them. For almost a century past his people has ceased to be a nation, with its own government, its native constitution. By its own fault, by a cruel bitter fate, it had sunk so low as to be obliged to succumb to the violent pressure of its neighbours, to submit to dismemberment at their hands and incorporation into other States, alien indeed, but more firmly compacted than itself. That lot has already, in the iron course of history, overtaken many a nation which has outlived itself, and has insensibly disappeared, absorbed in the life of the mighty conqueror. With tenacious perseverance and touching love of the fatherland, this people struggles against such iron destiny ; it cannot yet bring itself to die, and is unable to forget what it once was, in its heroic days. Reminding in many a striking feature of the people of the Jews, who nowhere on earth have settled so numerously and permanently as in this land, its sons wander hither and thither ; only against their will bearing the foreign yoke or eating the bread of exile, and watching for every intimation that may

serve to quicken afresh their lightly enkindled hope. It enters not into our design to measure the distance between the past and the present, and to trace out the causes which have brought, and must of necessity bring, this people to such depth of humiliation ; we have proposed to ourselves in the following pages the more attractive task of opening the book of Poland's history at the time of its most brilliant unfolding, and of reading a page which, full of promise as it is in its commencement, manifests so fatally at its close the germ of that sickness under which the fair land has pined almost to death.

Yes, it is Poland's heroic age, this first half of the sixteenth century. More widely have its frontiers never extended than under the last powerful rulers of the house of the Jagellons. Lelewel, whose heart glows with such ardent love for his country, furnishes us among the maps to his history of Poland with one of the time of John Albert, somewhere about the year 1500. It is a territory which in the north stretches along the coast from Dantsic to Memel, and then, in a line running almost direct east, touches the neighbourhood of Dünaburg, passes on by Witebsk to Smolensk, for the possession of which Russians and Poles often contended in those days, then again in the east bends deep into the land as far as the Donetz, and along the Dnieper attains the Black Sea at Kherson. The sea-coast forms as far as Kilia and Ismail the greatly contested frontier, which then stretches inland as far as Transylvania and along the Carpathians, including Moldavia, Bukovina, Galicia, in the west, as far as the district of Teschen, then northwards

touches on Glogau, thence to return in a circuitous line to the neighbourhood of Dantsic. The extensive domain is estimated at 200,000 square versts (nearly 80,000 square miles), with a total population of fifteen millions. The true parent land and core of the wide domain, in which alone we move in the following pages, was composed of two main parts : the northern champaign land of *Greater Poland*, with the erewhile independent dukedoms of *Cujavia* and *Masovia*, and the more southerly situated *Lesser Poland*, which extended to the Carpathians. The leading palatinates in Greater Poland were Posen, Kalisch, Sieradz, Lenczyc ; in Lesser Poland, on the other hand, Cracow, Sandomir, Lublin.

It was a wise step on the part of *Hedwig*, the young Queen of Poland, in whose veins Piastic blood still flowed, to sacrifice her inclination for Duke William of Austria to the welfare of the State, and to give her hand to the Lithuanian prince *Wladislaw Jagiello* (1386). With this marriage covenant Poland and Lithuania entered into the relation of a personal union, which, after a lapse of nearly two hundred years, terminated, by means of the famous Lublin Union (1569), in the firmly welding of the two lands into a single indivisible commonwealth under the same ruler and with like constitution. With *Wladislaw*, who had before consented to receive baptism in order to be able to wed the fair *Hedwig*, there ascended the throne that race under which Poland was led forward to its highest summit of prosperity. It is a kingly house of rare capacity, that of these Jagellons, gracious in its character, fascinating in the power and vigour with which its members wielded the sceptre, and with which they

were capable of inspiring their people, and that not seldom under the most adverse conditions. One of those most accurately acquainted with the facts aptly describes the Jagellons as "benevolent, winning, generous to self-deprivation, simple, accessible, grateful and easily attached, good-natured and yielding, like men who are guided more by the impulses of the heart than by the hard rule of abstract maxims."*

This fair heritage likewise pertained in its full extent to its last descendant but one, *Sigismund I.*, who for two-and-forty years (1506-1548) gloriously bore the crown in difficult times. He belongs to the most prominent figures of the sixteenth century, of high estimation in the council of the regents, feared by his enemies, but warmly loved by his people, specially during the first decades of his reign, and so long as the influence of his second consort, the intriguing Queen *Bona* (married 1519), did not make itself too greatly felt. *Sigismund* was zealous in the fulfilment of the arduous duties of a king of Poland, a faithful, watchful guardian of his land and people. Yet now and then a certain trace of weakness pervaded his actions; the wish for repose and order led him often to leave matters to take their own course where a tighter grasp of the rein was to be desired. Just upon the point which was at that time the most decisive of all, the religious question, his different measures are marked by a want of resolution, which could satisfy neither the Evangelicals nor the Romish Church, and which in reality proved not for the benefit of either. This wavering is not to be ascribed alone to his love of

* Caro, *Geschichte Polens* (Gotha, 1863 *sqq.*), iv. 306.

undisturbed repose ; a deeper, nobler characteristic of his nature rendered decision difficult for him in those stormy days. He was a faithful son of his Church; every revolt, therefore, against its ordinances seemed to him like an attempt to shake the strongest pillars of the State ; and thus pious attachment to the Pope and his own ardent patriotism contributed in equal degree to strengthen his endeavour to shut out the dreaded revolutionary element from his land. In this drift of his thoughts, however, it is easy to discover an undercurrent. Sigismund is a truly God-fearing man. In his letter to the Pope, as in many an edict, there breathes a tone not inspired by State policy, one which, flowing straight from the heart, bears noble testimony to his feelings, and the more so as this tone is so greatly wanting even in the pastoral letters of the bishops of those days. For a mind so constituted there must be much to astonish and repel in the proceedings of the Church and its dignitaries; nor did he shrink from revolting against these when the ecclesiastical assumptions too greatly infringed upon his kingly rights, and the papal authority would assert itself in a province in which he felt himself called to be the guardian of the nation's sovereignty. The times denied him the repose for meditating on the one thing needful ; the fatal consequence was that indecision which redounded to no blessing for his people.

Another element of difficulty was to be found in the constitution of the land, as this had gradually shaped itself out in long, deep-reaching conflicts. Poland had become a republic with a king at its head. The real power lay in the hands of the nobility, those families which in the struggles of

centuries had raised themselves most effectually out of the rank and file of citizens to a state of independence. The title to separation from the other classes of the population was to be found in the display of a right to particular armorial bearings, the evidence of belonging to a particular family. If this proof was given, the equal in lineage was acknowledged upon a par with all the nobles, and was invested with the like rights and obligations. True, it could not fail to come about, that single families and escutcheons should be particularly distinguished in the persons of some prominent bearers of the name and arms, and such families thereby acquired for themselves the highest offices in Church and State. This higher class of nobility were the barons, distinguished from the others by birth or possessions, or offices of pre-eminence. Certain offices likewise presupposed and conferred the dignity of a baron. The highest ecclesiastical dignities were those of the two archbishops of the land and the thirteen bishops ; the highest civil dignities were those of the thirty-five Palatines, the thirty greater Castellans of the kingdom (*majores castellani*), and forty-nine lesser Castellans (*minores*), who likewise, with ten other officers of state, formed the Senate.*

As opposed to the nobility, there arose in the towns with the lapse of time a new and weighty element, of which the princes often availed themselves as a means of holding in check the inconveniently powerful barons. The influence of these citizens was at that time one so deeply affecting the history of the Reformation in Poland, that we must,

* The order of succession of these dignitaries in Cromer, *Polonia (Coloniæ, 1594)*, p. 529.

at this early stage, direct attention to their particular position. The settlers in the towns were almost exclusively German immigrants, who had flowed in unbroken streams into the country from the time when the German impulse to emigration, awakened in the days of the Crusades, had (with their conclusion) lost the copious outlet into the hazy distance of the far East. This important element of culture received a friendly welcome in the wide, thinly populated territories of Poland. Very considerable independent powers were conferred upon the strangers, who throughout the whole land founded cities, and with German diligence, with German vigour, energetically prosecuted the arts of trade and commerce, and in the rapidly growing prosperity of the land abundantly rendered the tribute of their gratitude for the rights of hospitality accorded them. Yet it was a hospitality granted with Polish liberality, one might almost say recklessness. These German settlers had brought with them from home their own laws, which were confirmed and guaranteed to them by the Polish princes. In the northern towns, in Masovia and Cujavia, we meet for the most part with the Kulm law; in the southern Polish towns, extending as far as the Russian territory, the Magdeburg law. In the enjoyment of such privileges these towns lived a life by themselves in the midst of Poland, a part of Germany, and to such an extent that, e.g., the renowned book of the guilds in Cracow, the admirably executed miniatures of which afford us a lively picture of that age, is composed in the German and Latin languages. Such separate life in the midst of a foreign land may, under some circumstances, contribute to the material prosperity of the

land, and in Poland really did so, even as the German colonies in the interior of Russia have done; for the intellectual life, however, of the ancestral people, as also of the foreign nation in the midst of which they dwell, such colonists are in the hour of decision as a mole upon the body ; and such an hour of decision had then dawned. These German towns in Poland were intellectually cut away from the old home, only guarding with scrupulous, but narrow and illiberal fidelity, the heritage they had brought with them ; they did not live on by continuing to develop themselves, but persisted in stubbornly maintaining themselves at the same intellectual stage which the old fatherland had attained at the time of their departure. Against their new surroundings, above and below, they were firmly and closely shut up ; they lived side by side with the other inhabitants, but without inner contact, without blessing-fraught reciprocal feeling, as in a strongly entrenched fortress. This, however, is, from the national standpoint, no salutary connection for the land, nay, a heavy drag, when a people in the course of its history is placed in presence of a decision which it can solve satisfactorily only by means of national unity. These German citizens lived through successive centuries in Poland without having become Poles ; and they in turn were not everywhere strong and vigorous enough to germanise the whole land.

The third fragment of the population was formed by the peasants, the *kmetes*, a pitiable class, almost deprived of civil rights, serfs to the nobility, and living on, or rather pining on, under a heavy load of oppression. The distance between the lords and

these bondmen was so great and so sharply defined that one can hardly suppose the same old Polish blood to be flowing in the two parts ; one is rather reminded of the relation which subsists between a conquering people and the subjugated primitive races of the land, such as prevails in India and elsewhere. With twofold harshness and fatal effect must this distance make itself felt where the corrective middle link, the inhabitant of the towns, assumes a position adverse to both sides. As opposed to the nobles, to whom in his prerogatives he was as a thorn in the eye, he shut himself rigidly apart, and on every occasion of contact met with the same proud repulse which in the course of time, and specially in the days of the Reformation, manifested itself with the victorious consciousness on the part of the nobles of being able to break up and reduce to powerlessness the prerogatives of these foreign settlers. For the peasant, the property of the nobility, these townsmen had no heart nor any feeling of kinship : he spoke not their language, he sang not their songs, his past was foreign to them, and for his sad lot they had no compassion. Such was the condition and reciprocal feeling of the three constituent parts of the nation, the harmonious combination of which ever forms the strength of a people, but whose splitting up into sections of necessity dissipates the strongest force. The Reformation in particular, which from its very nature depends upon a hearty agreement of the whole people, and demands this for its success, bitterly experienced the effect of such a divided life and the total diversity of interests in the single parts.

But we have not yet spoken of the religious and

ecclesiastical life, the other essential factor in the definite and peculiar stamp and impress of a people.

More than half a millennium had passed since the Polish prince *Mieczyslaw*, the fourth in the succession of the Piasts (if we may accept the testimony of tradition), sued for the hand of *Dubrawka*, daughter of the Bohemian duke *Bolcsław*, and, in consequence of this marriage union with the zealous Christian princess, underwent the rite of baptism (966). A part of this, till then heathen, people willingly followed the example of their prince and received the doctrines of his first spiritual instructor, *Jordan*, although a long time elapsed before the last remains of heathendom disappeared. Upon the reception of baptism quickly followed the ecclesiastical organisation of the land; *Otho the Great* helped to found in Posen the first Polish bishopric, which was placed under the jurisdiction of the archbishopric of Magdeburg.

The German ecclesiastical influence felt at the outset was maintained in subsequent times, and indeed assumed ever greater proportions. In long well-nigh uninterrupted succession a mighty host of monks and priests out of almost every province of Germany pressed eastward to the Oder, and even more deeply into the land, to the Vistula, and founded monasteries and churches in every part in such great abundance that, from the time of the contact with the members of the Russian Church (begun in the days of the Jagellons), the latter were wont to call the Catholics the people "of German faith." With simple trust the nation submitted to the teachings of the Church, willingly received its ordinances, even those which were imposed in the form of heavy burdens and obligations. The fair Slavonic heritage

of a hearty piety was the property also of the Polish people. It is not the piety which, with sacred earnestness, penetrates exploringly into the depths of the Divine truth, and then, in prolonged meditation upon the one thing needful, holds fast to this one thrice sacred object as a precious acquisition and bliss-giving possession, to be maintained against every assault ; it is the pious mind which confidently surrenders itself to the guidance of the priests and the Church, willingly, and with but little hesitancy, accepting the Church's doctrine without much examination thereof, and in the prescribed manner devoutly fulfils the Church's demands ; in *God* fears the almighty *Lord*, but hardly has a conception of the abundant grace of being called by Christ to be a disciple, not a servant. The priest was for the Slav the spiritual " lord " who has authority over him, a sort of vicegerent of God, who regards the submissiveness shown to His representative as homage done to Himself.

Very much of that which was said of the foreign town-population in Poland may be repeated with regard to this priesthood, likewise alien in nationality, though it may be in the ecclesiastical domain the evil consequences of this diversity did not render themselves so sharply and strikingly apparent as in that of the State. The Romish priest is himself brought up without a home. It is true the impressions of youth, of the people whose language has become for one a mother-tongue, can never be entirely obliterated ; even under the most foreign cowl the home feeling with the land of one's descent still abides. It is otherwise here. Those who in the Romish Church and its Latin tongue had found a second fatherland saw themselves here in Poland

transplanted to a distant country ; no family bonds facilitated their taking root in the land ; the interest was wanting to them for coming into close contact with the mind and heart of the people, of so entering into their peculiar life as not only to live *among* them, but *with* them, and from such common social life to draw the right and qualification for further developing the intellectual life of the people in its thinking and acting. Centuries passed by without any national literature arising ; the cause thereof in those days is certainly to be sought in the foreign priests, the bearers of the culture of that time. Their mother-tongue, the Latin, made its way into the castles of the nobility, into the houses of the educated and refined ; and the first intellectual aspiration of the people found expression in this language. The deep gulf which separated the noble, in his almost boundless freedom, from the peasant, chained to the soil, would not have opened so widely if a native clergy, springing from the bosom of the people, had preserved the connection of the two parts of the national whole, then almost entirely divorced from each other.

With sure and firm step, the Church acquired from generation to generation an increasingly powerful, increasingly significant position in the land. In one respect there was no distinction between the different social ranks : in the devout subjection to the Church and its distant head, the vicegerent of the Lord in Rome. From the king down to the humblest peasant, willing obedience was rendered to him and his underteachers. To the Church and its highest dignitaries in the land there had been conceded in the course of time important prerogatives. The

Archbishop of Gnesen, as primate of the kingdom, occupied the place next after the king, and in the event of the king's death, presided over the government until a new head of the State was chosen. The bishops—we have already directed attention to this particular—stood upon a par with the highest civil dignitaries, yea, had the precedence of them in the Senate. From olden time the most distinguished bishoprics, after the archiepiscopal sees of Gnesen and Lemberg, were—in Lesser Poland, Cracow ; in Greater Poland, Posen ; in Cujavia and Pomerania, Wladislav ; in Masovia, Plotzk ; in the Russian territory, Przemisl and Chelm ; in Podolia, Kamenetz. The nobility were in possession of these spiritual dignities. A long warfare was waged by them for the exclusive right of possession ; and this warfare had followed consistently from their endeavour to bring all the power of the State within their grasp.

Yet, with however great fidelity and obedience the people in all its parts was attached to the Romish Church, it nevertheless early learned to exercise toleration towards those in its midst who were not members of that communion, and the more decidedly to do this in proportion as by victory it more and more widely extended its frontier. In the exercise of this Christian duty, so rare in those days, the nation was supported by the fine and noble impulses of the Slavonic nature, which is not easily aroused to religious fanaticism. Where we come upon manifestations of that kind in its midst it will not be difficult to detect the presence of foreign influence, by which the nation was impelled to enter upon paths it would hardly have entered on of its own accord. First of all, the Poles were brought into

contact in this respect with the Jews. As early as the ninth century not a few of these went up from the Chazar empire of the Lower Danube.* The immigration assumed larger proportions in the eleventh and twelfth centuries on the side of the west, whence, in ever-augmented degree, the Jews were expelled by Rome and the Romish Church. The inflow from Germany was so great that to this day the Polish Jew has preserved the German language as the main constituent in his corrupt jargon. Trade and the practice of usury formed the principal means of livelihood with these new-comers. They were not even in Poland entirely spared the severe oppression to which they were everywhere exposed under the influence of the Romish Church, but in Poland the pressure was diminished ; they were not the bondmen of the princes, as elsewhere ; were only under their immediate legal administration, and thus could not, as the other immigrants from Germany, appeal to the Magdeburg law in the case of disputes arising. Specially *Casimir the Great* stood forth for their protection, even in defiance of the severe measures which had, under the influence of the Dominicans, been enacted in the ecclesiastical assembly at Ofen (1279) against the Jews of the Carpathian lands. It was not the spirit of toleration alone which guided him and a part of his successors, particularly *Sigismund I.*, in thus acting ; they recognised the

* Empire of the Chazars (or Khozars). The Chazars were an early people, formerly occupying territory between the Black Sea and the Caspian, known to the ancients as Scythians. See Gregorieff's *Russia in Asia*. The history of the Jewish settlements under their sway is sketched by Dr. A. Harkavy (*Altjüdische Denkmäler aus der Krim*).

trading instinct of this thrifty people, which unlocked the treasures of the land, and whose amassed wealth often served the kings themselves in good stead. Other religious elements, too, were introduced in the process of extending the frontiers of Poland : the occupation of Podolia had incorporated Tsheremissian Tartars into the kingdom, and on the Lower Danube Mohammedans belonged to Poland ; in Lithuania heathen were still to be found.

Apart from the comparatively few Armenians who, likewise by the incorporation of Podolia, became united to the kingdom of Poland without their position towards the Pope and the Church of Rome being as yet clearly defined,* the most important and pressing occasion for the manifestation of a tolerant spirit towards men of other faith within the kingdom was the receiving of nearly a third part of the adherents of the Greek ritual under the sway of the Polish king as Grand Duke of Lithuania, which was brought about by the accession of the Jagellons. Heathen Lithuania indeed had been led by Jagiello to Christianity and the Romish Church ; bordering upon Lithuania, however, were a series of provinces, acquired by conquest, whose inhabitants had for centuries been so firmly attached to the Greek Church, that the princes of the house of *Gedimin* had been obliged, as a condition of their sovereignty, to go over to this Church. The metropolis of the Greek Church, Kieff, was included within the domain of Lithuania ; at the baptism of *Wladislaw Jagiello* the

* Cromer, p. 500 : "Armeni suis ritibus suaque lingua in sacris utuntur. Non abhorrent ii tamen, sicut accepimus, a romana ecclesia et rom. pontifice ; quin principatum ejus in universa Christi ecclesia agnoscent."

astonished Catholics of Cracow beheld even Greek bishops in his retinue. By reason of thus living side by side with those of other faith, men in Poland became accustomed to regard the belonging to the Church of Rome as not equivalent to the belonging to Christianity, an important advance for that time. Owing to the transference of the Metropolitan of Kieff to Moscow, the desire, favoured by the prince, for the formation of a national Church of the Greeks belonging to Lithuania had gained considerable ground. At a synod in the year 1415, in which the Archbishop of Polock, the Bishops of Czernigow, Luck, Vladimir, Przemisl, Smolensk, Chelm, and Turowsk took part, they selected (after the example of the Bulgarians and Servians) a metropolitan of their own, *Gregory Zemblack*, and assigned to him Kieff as his metropolis. With great interest and even joy was the incident followed in Rome. The old rivalry between the two Churches was not emphasised; the proceedings at the Council of Constance (1414—1418) and that of Florence (1437) display a mutual friendly approach. Although the final result did not correspond to the expectations cherished, yet the attempts themselves were of the greatest possible significance for the people of Poland and Lithuania, whence the movement emanated, and the after-effects thereof may be traced in the following century in many a surprising phenomenon which, without taking into account these previous events, would wear a strange complexion.

Very different was the line of conduct towards the almost contemporaneous surging upheaval in the land of a kindred race, Bohemia. The fierce Hussite conflicts cast their mighty waves as far as Poland in

the form of countless fugitives, who for their faith's sake left their native soil, torn up as it was by the violent movement, and begged the rights of asylum in a foreign land. The immense crowds of fugitive exiles who at this time stood at the erewhile so hospitable frontiers of Poland and sought admission appeared not in the character of sons of a powerful Church, at home in the full enjoyment of its rights, but as dangerous apostates from the same mother Church, which in Poland still preserved its authority unimpaired ; as firebrands of a conflagration which had well-nigh consumed Bohemia and was now hurling its sparks into Poland, and here threatening the Romish Church with the same peril. Against these dangerous people one must maintain the most resolute defence, the most inexorable persecution, even for the sake of one's own security in Church and State. The Church, with keen eye, had first discerned the magnitude of the danger for Poland also. It was principally two men who in those days exerted the greatest influence, though by no means a salutary one, in the ecclesiastical and civil domain, and held the aged king (*Wladislaw Jagiello*) almost entirely in their power. These were *Zbigniew Olesnicki*, Bishop of Cracow, a man of remorseless fanatical zeal, and *Stanislas Ciolek*, Secretary of the Royal Chancery, afterwards Bishop of Posen. It is a sad picture which Caro draws of these men, similar, as he observes, to the forms which over in Italy were wont at that time to relate their lewd histories to Boccacio in the refectory of the Augustin monastery of San Spirito at Florence. At a provincial synod at Leczyc the measures to be adopted against the Hussite heresy were soon resolved on ; an assembly of the nobility,

which shortly followed, accepted a project of law drawn up by *Ciolek*, to which it would not be difficult to secure the royal assent.

It is a harsh language, till then unfamiliar to Polish ears, when it runs in this edict, "After mature deliberation, and with consent of our prelates, princes, and barons, we determine, and declare, moreover, that we wish it to be held as a fixed, abiding, and unalterable decree, that in our kingdom of Poland, and in all the lands subject to us, every heretic, or every one tainted with heretical doctrines, or suspected thereof, and in like manner every one who is an abettor of heretics, shall, by our captains and officers throughout the land, be seized as a traitor and punished according to requirement. All persons who enter our kingdom from Bohemia shall be arrested, and subjected to an examination concerning heretical teachers on the part of those deputed thereto by the Apostolic see. Every Pole, whosoever he may be, that shall not have returned out of Bohemia before Ascension Day next (1424) shall be looked upon as a convicted heretic, and be liable to the punishments appointed for heretics. All his goods and chattels fall to the State treasury, his male and female descendants forfeit their right of heirship and their rank, and his family is declared infamous and deprived of all the privileges of the nobility."*

Inexorable as sounded the language, and terrible as the punishments threatened against the Hussite heresies, they did not prove altogether successful. The sacred power of the Gospel everywhere calls forth the spirit of freedom, in such wise that it can

* Kautz, *Præcipua ac publica rel. evang. in Polonia fata* (Hamburg, 1738), p. 7.

neither be repressed by the severest Draconian edicts nor can ever suffer its confessors to sink so deeply as to be capable of acting against conscience. The Hussite movement had touched the soul of the Slavonic people ; there was in it an element which found a response in the whole race. The eloquent burning language of the Bohemian preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel of Prague had fearlessly laid bare gross abuses in the Romish Church ; with an appeal to Scripture, *Hus* and his successors drew attention to the almost forgotten truth of the Gospel, a cock-crowing of the early dawn, while *Hus* was himself still devoted in pious fidelity to the Romish Church. The Bohemian and Polish nobles at Constance sought to protect him as a popular hero of kindred race with them both ;* the flames of his stake shone with piercing light into the soul of both nations, awakening in the first instance a sense of scandal and perplexed astonishment with regard to a mother Church which could deal thus with such a son, but in its wider progress enkindling in single souls the earnest purpose of testing the doings of the Church and the demands of the martyr by the standard of Holy Scripture. From this time we meet with slighter or more perceptible traces of Hussite activity in the land. In Lithuania they were for the most part political considerations which led the Grand Duke *Witold*, this towering colossal form of the Slavonic national spirit, to look upon the move-

* Krasinski, *Historical Sketch of the Reformation in Poland* (London, 1838), i. 63, where, moreover, the following passage is adduced from a letter of *Hus* in his prison : “ Poloni tamquam strenues defensores veritatis Dei opponerunt [opposuerunt] se saepius toti concilio pro liberatione mea. D. Wenceslaus de Leszna intrepidus et zelosus defensor.”

ment with favourable eyes. We are told of a judge in Posen who afforded the rights of hospitality in his house to fugitive Bohemian preachers;* the names of a series of Polish barons in high position, at their head the mighty vayvode *Ostrorog*,† have been preserved to us as openly favouring the movement. Nay, the imperious *Sbigneus* was obliged to threaten with excommunication the old king *Wladislaw Jagiello*, now in his eighty-fourth year, who, in consequence of his natural kindliness of disposition and of his great age, had grown somewhat remiss, for having received Hussites into Kazimierz, the suburb of Cracow, in order that they might not be deprived of religious services during the Easter-time of 1431, when the fanatical Bishop had laid the capital under an interdict. During the whole century we can see the Hussite movement running through like a scarlet thread, perceptible now here, now there. It essentially contributed to set men in larger numbers examining the life and doings of the clergy, and comparing these with the walk of those men who forsook their native land for the truth's sake, and were minded to live a moral life in the following of their Lord.

Only in faint outline have we described the signs which slowly, as the appearing of the daybreak towards the month of May in the far north, for

* Salig, *Vollst. Historie der Augsburger Konfession* (Halle, 1730), ii., p. 524.

† At the National Diet of 1459 this gifted and distinguished man gave expression to his opinion regarding the ecclesiastical and political relations of his native land, afterwards publishing the same in a special work, "Pro reipublicæ ordinatione," a tractate full of profound thoughts on the relation between Church and State. Compare the full account in Krasinski, i. 94.

Poland too proclaimed the dawn of a new day in the religious life of the Christian peoples. Only solitary notes of contemporaries penetrate to us like prophet voices. This is explicable. The people in the lower strata, held down in ignorance and slavish dependence, lived on in silence, hardly betraying in national song the breathing of an intellectual life ; in the upper strata the first modest endeavours after an independent national literature were only beginning to appear. Those who wielded the pen in the Latin language, a tongue foreign to the nation at large, were for the most part devoted servants of their Church, and accordingly wrote under its eye and as animated by its spirit. If nevertheless inconvenient statements about the grievous apostasy were heard from the mouth of those who had renounced the degenerate mother Church, the retrograde movement which set in during the following centuries, with a keen scent for heresy, was busily engaged in stifling the obnoxious note. Only here and there has such unfavourable report, hidden away in some fortunate hour in a remote library, escaped the vigilance of the Jesuits, now first to come forth in other and more favourable times, out of its long resting-place, to the broad light of day. However sparse and fragmentary the notices hitherto made public, they yet suffice to bear testimony to the fact that the beginning of the sixteenth century in Poland also found ready to hand the heritage, everywhere abundantly amassed, of the Middle Ages, in the urgent need, nay, the absolute necessity, for a reformation of the Church in its head and its members. It is true Poland presented in its peculiar relations, as above indicated, special and very difficult

problems for solution ; but it would be false to speak of these difficulties as insuperable. For who can forbid the Spirit of God to breathe where He will ? who is able to assign a limit to His action ?

In all the lands of the Reformation we see that it has been men richly endowed with grace whom the Lord of the Church has called to enter upon the heritage received. Like victorious leaders of armies, they have brought in the hosts of the believers to the sanctuary of God's word, and shown them therein, as the most precious treasure of the Reformation, the alone salvation in the grace of God through Jesus Christ. Has such an one been wanting to Poland ? Has there arisen among its manly sons no hero ready to respond to the call of the Lord, "Here am I ; send me" ?

II.

FAMILY AND YOUTH.

AT Petrikow we quit the track of the railway which in the present day connects the old capital of Masovia, Warsaw, with Vienna. Not without an effort do we withstand the attraction to pay a visit to a town so rich in historic reminiscences, within whose walls more than one fascinating page in the history of Poland has been written ; for here during the bloom-time of the Jagellons most of the national diets held their sittings, often of so stormy a character, of so great import for the whole of Europe. Another task impels us into the interior of the land. We mount the open carriage standing ready at the railway station, and are quickly rolling on our way, behind our cheery team, towards the interior, bound for the out-of-the way town of Lask, a distance of some six German miles (twenty-five to thirty English miles). Through the midst of truly Polish scenery speeds the carriage. The far-reaching undulating plain is a well-cultivated and fertile district ; here and there at the verge of the horizon is descried a slight extent of forest, but a forest ever receding farther before the ploughshare, from which the colonist hopes to obtain more abundant returns out of the soil. We meet with but few inhabitants ; rarely does the

road pass through any village. One's thoughts can take their flight undisturbed ; during this journey they wander back a few centuries, and try to fit for a moment the bygone days within the existing frame. At that time the district, now so smiling in the sunshine of July, and kept in order with diligent hand, wore a very different aspect. Then the woodland still prevailed over the greater part of the country, and that in an almost unchecked primitive wildness hardly accessible to the bold hunter, who, however, saw his courage in the dark forests rewarded by a heart-gladdening spoil of many a choice head of game, such as has long ago disappeared. In the abundant forest tarns the wild swine made their home in great numbers. Along the fringe of the heathland wandered the bear, and refreshed itself with the wild honey which dropped in enticing plenty from the stems of the trees. On the poor, roughly cultivated arable land one came here and there upon settlements, wretched huts, hardly more than cabins, built of mud and covered with straw, in which the *kmete*, oppressed with heavy burdens and enforced labours, passed his sad existence, timid and submissive to his lord, by whom he was often held in less estimation than the precious beaver whose building he had carefully to protect or the falcon cherished for the master's sport.

These are for us children of the nineteenth century gloomy pictures, on which our eye does not care to rest. Shortly before one comes to Lask, the ground resembles the landscape of the Dunes, but with the difference that the refreshing glimpse of the sea is wanting : sand-hills, with only a scanty growth upon them, run far into the cultivated land. We now

enter the little borough, whose unpretending appearance leads us to ask by what right it claims to be a town. Nothing there can rivet the attention of the ordinary traveller : the same few broad streets as anywhere else in Poland ; properly speaking, only the highway, which at this place is flanked on either side by little unattractive houses, but in two places opens out into great wide squares. The one is that of the Market, made of considerable extent, in order on particular days to harbour, as it were, a second population of the little town in the shape of men and cattle, which pour in out of the country from afar to buy and sell that which is necessary for the sustaining of rustic life, but at other times a desolate monotonous level, on rainy days unspeakably dirty, and just as unspeakably dusty in the hot summer weather. The dreary place has nothing to say to us, bent as we are on a search after ancient historic reminiscences. So much greater, however, is our interest in the other. It is the Church Square.

A hurried examination of the documentary records in the parish church * having proved unavailing, there remained yet one more visit to be paid in Lask, thus to come perchance upon ancient traces of our hero.

Only with difficulty did we find out a Jew, of whom, it need not be said, there are very many in the Polish country town, who recalled to mind from the time of his long-past boyish days the remains of

* The armorial bearings of the Laski family are still to be discovered built into the masonry of the outer wall of the Church. The escutcheon *Korab*, representing a mediæval ship with lofty poop, bearing as cargo a sort of watchtower, is in this instance surmounted by the mitre of the archbishop.

an old castle in the neighbourhood. Out in the outskirts of the town, we succeeded, with his help, in discovering the spot. Surrounded by ploughed land, there is seen, in a poor neglected combination of orchard and kitchen-garden, a very ancient row of trees, which gives the impression of having been a former avenue to a large park. The original road is overgrown with brushwood and rank grass. Not far removed from it stands an ancient wall, now serving as a convenient solid background of a store-room for potatoes and field fruits during the winter. The masonry, thirteen cubits long, four cubits high,* is built up of great stones, and forms a substructure which may at one time have supported an imposing building, but constitutes to-day the only melancholy remains of the ancestral castle of the once so powerful baronial family of the *Laskis*. No one in the little town now knew anything of the family ; the very name would have died away and been forgotten had not the town itself retained it. It is a painful impression. Let us seek to banish it by the story of a renowned member of the family, as this has been put together by us from sources widely removed, and often of exceeding scanty outflow.

Far away up there, where all objects are lost in the hazy blue of the distance, tradition places the origin of the Laski family. We surrendered ourselves for a moment to its guidance ; but whenever we sought to follow up an indication, specially when it pointed with great decidedness to England as the cradle of the race, we invariably returned after a while undeceived. That which is furnished by the

* Thirty feet by a little over nine feet.—TR.

unreliable Damalewicz,* in the driest chronicler's style, is wanting in all historic support. The Catholic narrator, belonging to the seventeenth century—it is true, without mention of his authorities—makes the founder of the house, *Indelbertus Laski*, come over to the Anglo-Saxon coasts out of Normandy with William the Conqueror, and receive, as the prize of his heroic valour at the Battle of Hastings (1066), Pomfret Castle and the territory of Blackburnshire. His grandson, *Henry*, is made by the same fabling chronicler founder of the abbey of Christal. A later descendant, *Albert Laski*—thus prattles this gossiping authority—Baron of Haulton and Constable of Chester, had to leave England because he accused King John of the murder of his royal nephew. The fugitive wandered to Poland, where he was received with open arms by the courageous and enterprising *Boleslaw Krzywousty*.† Like his ancestor in England, the new-comer so greatly distinguished himself by valour that he was rewarded with large possessions in the land of his adoption. His grandson, *Robert*, is already spoken of as Castellan of Sieradz, one of the highest posts in the land, whose occupant for the time being had to administer the rights of the king within the said territory. Here in Poland—so Damalewicz tells us—

* The relation, as yet unprinted, will be found in the collection of MSS. in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg (Q. I., No. 47): Stephen Damalewicz, *Historia imaginis B. V. M. miraculosoæ, in oppido Lasko in Palatinatu Siradiensi in Polonia* (1663).

† John Lackland is believed to have put to death the unfortunate Arthur about 1203, whereas Boleslaw Krzywousty died as early as 1139; and the MS. itself even further relates that Robert Laski was already Palatine of Siradia in 1081, and that his son Robert was Bishop of Cracow in 1143!

the original escutcheon was accordingly altered. From its Norman home the family had brought with it to England the heraldic device of a lion ; this henceforth gave place to the "ship," on which the ancestor, fleeing from England, had made his fortune-bringing voyage to the hospitable shores of Poland.

These nebulous forms of legendary ancestors disappear in the daylight of well-authenticated documents. In these there emerges, so far as I can learn, as the first of the family, *John*, called, on account of his bodily stature, "the Little," Bishop of Cracow, who died in 1392, after many afflictions, patiently endured.* The Bishop is renowned as a great and learned man ; he was distinguished not only for considerable theological attainments, but also as an eminent physician, highly esteemed as such by his king, Lewis, and his see had to boast of many advantages received at his hand. His brother *Albert* outlived him by a quarter of a century. The latter was lord of the manor of Lask and Krowicz, from 1391 till his death in 1417 Castellan of Leczyc (Ladensis).† He died in his strong castle of Smarszew ; his son interred him in the family vault at the church of the Minorites in Kalisch. He married Catharine, the titled daughter of the Standard-bearer of Sieradz ; the high dignity of the father-in-law descended to his son John (1393—1451). As such, *John Laski* had to carry in battle the banner of this palatinate, a perilous post of honour, as the brave

* *Pomniki Dziejowe Polski* (Lwow, 1878), iii. 264, 371.

† So according to the MS. which lies before me : "Genealogia familiae Laski de stemmate Korab, oriundæ ex oppido Lask in antiquo Palatinatu Siradiensi sito, titulo comitum in eodem Lask condecoratae, conquisita et extracta ex actis terrestribus et castrensisbus."

man may often have experienced in the troublous days of Wladislaw III. and Casimir. In his time the village lying adjacent to the ancestral seat of Lask was transformed into a town (1422). After the death of his wife Anne (1448), the robust and devout hero, already well on in the fifties, undertook a journey to the Holy Sepulchre. As *miles Jerosolimitanus*, he returned home. On his way back he fell sick in Nicomedia and lost his eyesight. Blind, they brought him back once more to Lask, where he soon after died ; his four sons, *Andrew*, *John*, *Matthias*, and *Peregrinus*, interred the father in the church at Lask (1451).

Before the father had entered upon his pilgrimage he had betrothed his son *Andrew* to Barbara, of the noble house of Rembieszow (Randyeszow). Besides two daughters, of whom only faint traces, hardly more than conjectures, have come down to us, there sprang from this marriage four sons. The eldest, named after his father, *Andrew*, was Custos of Gnesen, Cracow, and Cujavia, and held a canonicate in Posen. When he died, in 1512, he was interred by his brother in the cathedral church of Gnesen. This his brother *John*, born in 1456 at the family seat of Lask, attained to the highest spiritual dignity in Poland, and died Archbishop of Gnesen 1531. We shall often in the sequel have occasion to return to him. Of the youngest brother, *Michael*, who seems to have died early, there is nothing to relate. For us his elder brother *Jaroslaw*, the father of our hero, occupies the foreground. He was lord of the manor at Lask. From 1492 to 1506, we find him Tribune of Sieradz, upon which office his younger brother entered when he himself became Palatine of

Leczyc. Eleven years later he was Palatine of Sieradz, in the possession of which dignity he died in 1523. As Palatine or Vayvode, he was leader of the troops of his hundred in war; in time of peace he called the provincial council of the nobility together, in which assemblies he held the position of president and gave judgment. He had to fix the price of merchandise, and there was committed to him the oversight of weights and measures. The Jews of the district were placed under his protection.* Our highly distinguished vayvode (that of Sieradz occupied in the Senate the seventh place in order among the thirty-one palatines of the land) had been espoused since 1493 to Susanna of Bakova-Gora, of the family Novina or Ptomicnczyk.† The married pair resided for the most part at the ancestral castle in Lask, where also most of the children were born. Three sons and four daughters sprang from this union. The traces of the daughters are almost lost; in the evening of the life of our Johannes we see some nephews greeting the uncle upon his return to Poland. Of the second of the three sons our narrative treats.

John a Lasco beheld the light of the world in the fortress of his father's family, probably about the year 1499. Here, in the finely situated castle, the boy spent his childhood in the society of his parents and the companionship of his brothers and sisters. In great fear and reverence of the father and mother were the Polish children of those days brought up. It was looked upon as a distinction to be allowed to

* Cromer, p. 507.

+ *Acta Cap. Gnesn.*, i. 49.

remain a considerable time with the parents ; ordinarily the children in such great houses were consigned to their own rooms and to the care of attendants or tutors. Not rarely might one see upon the landed estates, besides the nobleman's mansion, the proper family seat, likewise a separate edifice which served as a domicile for the children, and from which they came, as it were, on a visit to their parents.

The first years of life the children may have passed in quiet, amidst the fresh and invigorating country life. Even though a noisy and uproarious mirth may have prevailed in the nobleman's house, taking into account the hospitality of the land, the manifold forms of dissipation, and the exalted position occupied by the head of the family, yet but little of this turmoil penetrated into the apartments of the children, who were kept far away from the din and distraction of social life. The education of the family began early. In the towns there were schools, or the growing lads were sent to the nearest cloister-school ; the wealthy noble took into his house a young priest or tutor, to whom the whole training was then committed. The education of youth of noble birth was a careful one in those days. Much diligence in particular was applied to the acquiring of the Latin language, the boys and girls taking part together ; and both sexes acquired so great a degree of proficiency therein, that they employed, in oral and written intercourse, this foreign language, which was even more homely and familiar to them than the sound of their mother-tongue.

Seldom did the children while they were young go beyond the limits of their parents' castle. They

lived there in their world apart, coming rarely in contact with people outside. The road to the church, when they became of age to accompany their friends thither, first brought them into the little town and past the dwellings of strangers. Then fell for them too the drawbridge of the castle gate ; and beyond the rampart and moat, which protected their parents' castle against any sudden assault, they went forth into the outside world. With a moat, the little town was, like the castle, guarded against attack. On their way to church the children had early opportunity of seeing the poverty-stricken condition of the inhabitants, who came out of their miserable huts when the sons of their lords passed by from the castle, and saluted them in deep subjection. Here it was the poor timid *kmetes*, or peasants, who, without proprietary rights of land and soil, yet with a sort of hereditary title to their farms, were bound to yield rent and military service to their feudal lord ; there the bondmen of the estate, living in a still more abject condition, small craftsmen and servants, who must always be at the master's call as brewers, bakers, turners, brick-makers, keepers, attendants on dogs and horses, etc., and otherwise had to render him a heavy tribute.

From among the miserable cabins of earth or wood in the little town, the stone church rose in splendour, an object of almost astonishing adornment amidst the indigent surroundings, yea even surpassing in its outward appearance the house of the nobleman itself. It could not fail to produce an early and abiding impression upon the susceptible minds of the children when they observed how highly the sanctuary of the house of God was

esteemed, with what self-denying solicitude the family was intent upon the embellishment of the church.

The grandfather, *Andrew*—so it was related to the eagerly listening children—had more than half a century ago devoted a stone church to St. Anne, upon the spot where a poor little building dedicated to St. Michael had stood before. His son, their uncle *John*, was at that very time lavishing yet greater sacrifices and wealth of art upon their parish church. With his lively family feeling, with his warm love of country, he rested not until he had conferred enhanced lustre and renown upon the church of his childhood. He was the means, in 1506, of inducing the Archbishop of Gnesen to found a collegiate institute in connection with this church. As soon as he had himself become archbishop, and had returned from his journey to Rome, he caused the church to be enlarged, and its interior completed, in part by Italian architects from Cracow. The new edifice received the name of the Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, and also Church of St. Michael. As the greatest object of veneration, in addition to many other relics and precious vessels, he bestowed upon it the statue of Mary, executed in white marble, which Pope *Clement VII.* had given to him, faithful Catholic as he was, and regarding which it was quickly rumoured that it was gifted with miraculous powers, and that helpless invalids were healed by touching it, not at all to the hurt of Lask. For during many successive centuries pilgrimages were made from afar to this statue, which is now but little visited and appealed to for help, hidden as it is in the world-forgotten

little town, and, moreover, so concealed behind the altar-piece that it displays its not unattractive features only to those who ask to see it. Many another pious gift, too, of the uncle, such as that sumptuous monstrance, might serve to call up to the boy's memory the faithful attachment of his family to the church. To the end of his life the Arch-bishop retained this unselfish affection. Even while the nephew was enjoying the companionship of Erasmus, the uncle extended to prelates and canons the benefits of the college founded two decades before. In this church our Johannes cherished the first dreams and thoughts in his devout boyish mind : that he too, destined by his friends for the clerical career, would one day have willingly to devote his powers to God on behalf of the Church, and at that time also, in childish delight, he was ready to do so in the ways of his fathers. For of any worship under other forms and modes he could not conceive ; this entirely filled up his youthful soul. It is true, another current was already sweeping through the aisles of many a church even in Poland like the soft resounding note of an *Æolian harp* but we have discovered no indication that the wondrously affecting note had as yet reached the ear of the boy in the Chancellor's church of his native Lask, the note which sounded forth, *e.g.*, in the letter of *Bernard of Lublin* to *Simon of Cracow*, even before the time when Luther fixed his theses upon the castle church at Wittenberg,—that we have only to believe the Gospel, and all human ordinances might safely be annulled.

The boys passed no more than their childhood in rustic seclusion at the family castle of Lask,

Perhaps even from the time of the coronation of King *Sigismund* (1507), or, it may be, only from the time of the uncle becoming Archbishop of Gnesen (1510), the latter received his nephews into his archiepiscopal residence at Cracow, there to bestow upon them a higher education, mainly under his own oversight.* The Archbishop cherished great affection for his family, specially for his brother the Palatine of Sieradz and his talented, highly endowed sons. Willingly did the father grant to the royal chancellor and after-archbishop free rein in the education of his sons. The Archbishop belonged in those days to the number of the most renowned personages of the Polish court. Great services rendered to his fatherland had obtained for him the high position of Primate of the kingdom, and he filled this office in a brilliant manner as an ecclesiastical prince and a statesman of the first rank. King *Casimir* had already desired to have the secretary and chancellor of his lord-chancellor in his own immediate service, as had also, but likewise for the time being without success, King *John Albert*. Some few embassies, however, Laski could not decline. He was in Rome when the troops of Charles VIII. entered there (1494), and a second time at the great Jubilee (1500); in like manner we see him at Brussels in the year 1497. In 1502 he becomes chief secretary to the King; in the following year he is already Chancellor of the kingdom. We cannot follow this energetic man through all the labours by which in that position he rendered such eminent services to king and country, until at the age of

* Walewski, *Jan Laski, reformato Kosciola* (Warszawa, 1872), p. 358.

only fifty-four, he attained to the highest dignity in the kingdom.

There is presented to us in his person the enchanting picture of a mighty prince of the Church of that day. His significance lies much more in the civil than the ecclesiastical domain. He administers his high office with great prudence, and always as one animated by an ardent love of the fatherland. In his actions he is guided in the first instance by his views as a Pole. It is thus he gives his counsel to the King; thus he raises his powerful voice in the Senate, at the different provincial diets. The Church is not a matter of indifference for him; far from it. He is and will be a Polish Catholic; firmly and faithfully is he wedded to his Church, even to its so great errors, so superstitious customs of those days; while those of his own rank in Rome have only the same pitying smile alike for these and for the truths of the Gospel. It is not merely a sense of prudence which impels him to obtain an approving papal brief for his edition of the civil laws; his wish is to have done nothing which might be displeasing to the Pope.* Just as little is it with him imitation of traditional custom; he is really of the devout belief that he shall rest in more sacred soil when he brings with him earth from Jerusalem and from the grave of St. Gregory, and causes it to be emptied out in front of the cathedral church at Gnesen, on the spot where one day his bones are to be laid. With real devotion does he give reception to the relics which have been presented

* Compare Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta Polonica et Lithuaniae* (Rome, 1861), ii. 362.

to him in Rome : for such gift he has no sparkling jest at hand. He does not take pleasure in fleecing the credulous multitude by means of such jugglery, and thus drawing a large sum into his own purse ; he takes them home as precious keepsakes, and is ready, among the first, to bow the knee before such objects of veneration. He defends the rights of his Church with all zeal, and desires to safeguard it against the poison of false doctrine. His devout, tolerant Slavonic mind preserves him from the supposition that such protection is to be found in the stake which consumes the body of the heretic.

As a Polish ecclesiastical prince, the Archbishop lived in great and brilliant style. It is an abundant inventory of valuables which he devises to friends and relatives in his will.* The long enumeration makes us soon forget that it is the legacy of a servant whose Master, poorer than fox and bird of the air, had not where to lay His head. The Archbishop's position necessitated his holding court, and not in Gnesen alone : in Cracow too he had his residence, where the highest of the kingdom went in and out.

Hither he had his three nephews removed so soon as the years came when they must receive a higher education in order to fit them for the career which, in consultation with their father, he selected for them. *Jerome* and *Stanislas* were destined to the statesman's office, while our *Johannes*—as it seems, his uncle's favourite—was early marked out for an ecclesiastical career. We have not the slightest ground for

* Compare Zeissberg, *Johannes Laski und sein Testament* (in *Proceedings of Royal Academy of Sciences*) (Vienna, 1874), p. 708, seq.

supposing that the nephew submitted only with reluctance to such determination. In a high degree had Divine grace endowed him for the sublime vocation, though in such widely different fulfilment from that which the uncle, who is not undeservedly accused of nepotism, dreams of for him. Often may he have looked with satisfaction in those days upon the quiet, gentle boy, with his great thoughtful eyes, as being the heir not only to his name, but, through the exertion of his powerful influence, one day also to his position.

It was a vast change, particularly for the mind of an emotional youth, from the quiet of a country life, from the seclusion of his father's castle, to be transferred all at once into the bustling city of Cracow and into the palace of the revered Archbishop. Cracow was then in the days of its splendour. King *Casimir the Great*, who so much loved the city, had found it at his accession built of wood and earth, but at his death had left it constructed of stone. During the preceding half-century the prosperity of the city had increased with extraordinary strides ; hand in hand therewith had arisen a creative spirit, delighting to give to this wealth an abiding expression in magnificent buildings, such as bear fair testimony to a lively taste for art. The very different conditions of later centuries have not succeeded altogether in effacing this expression. Even in the present day the city enchains us by its ancient towering structures, and the judge of architecture still discovers many an edifice which brings to his mind those palmy days of the Jagellonian age. One trait in particular even now manifests itself with great significance ; the twofold current, namely, which

then ran through the whole civil and social life of Poland, finds its living manifestation in the buildings of the city. Above, upon the Wawel, where stands the proud castle, and within the court-yard of the castle the cathedral, there the Polish king has built ; in close contiguity to him, at the foot of the hill and in some bordering streets, likewise the high nobility, spiritual and temporal ; in the city, strictly speaking, the German merchant and tradesman raised his buildings, edifices which furnish eloquent testimony to his wealth, but at the same time to his sense of nationality, his own self-esteem. Among the architects upon the hill, Master *Bartholomæus*, of Florence, towers specially above the rest. It was he who executed the Jagellon Chapel, a superb masterpiece of the Renaissance. The Germans in the city below would have none of the new style now coming into vogue, nor of the foreign masters from Italy : they fetched their artists from Nuremberg. For years did the renowned master *Veit Stoss* labour in their princely pay upon his main work, the high altar in the Church of St. Mary at the Circle. These German settlers in Cracow had acquired great privileges, retaining their own civic law and forming almost an independent State within the State. They never became amalgamated with the Poles, but lived in the land a life apart, a separation which was accurately reflected in the physiognomy of the town. Down there at the Circle they were their own lords, only overtowered by the royal seat upon the Wawel, and surrounded by the same protecting rampart of the city walls. The stranger who visited Cracow thought himself transported to Nuremberg. The people upon the streets spoke in the language

of their home-land ; the enormous commerce which was then so vigorously carried on by water and land at this, the converging point in those days of the intercourse between the East and West, was all in German hands ; the flourishing trade, too, was exclusively German, maintained, in conjunction with the old well-organised guilds of the fatherland, in the ancient and strictly regulated ordinances and customs of the German citizens.

Everywhere, upon the streets, in the houses, in the guild chambers and halls, prevailed a most active and bustling life. That which must most favourably strike one in a city like Cracow at this time is the remarkable prominence given to the burgher element, side by side with the imposing splendour and glory of the residence of a king whose voice was mighty in the council of crowned heads—a burghership which was conscious of its own importance, and with pride also knew how to maintain its rights in presence of a haughty nobility. It was not thus at all in accord with the other relations in the land. Nor was it yet known at that time, that the powerful nobility would gradually, to the ruin of the country, force back this so important element, and deprive it of its privileges.

With great earnestness and jealous care did the uncle watch over the education of the nephews committed to his charge. He demanded much of them and imposed severe discipline, because he intended one day to confer much upon them, and would confer this only upon men who were called, by reason of their vigour and ability, to be an ornament of their country. Cracow offered even in those days a choice of very fine schools ; the Archbishop, however, pre-

ferred, as was then customary with the nobility of higher rank, to provide private tuition for his wards, who were accordingly placed in the hands of a pedagogue. This course was the more imperative in the present case, inasmuch as the uncle was often obliged to stay for a long time together in other places, while Cracow remained the constant dwelling-place of his nephews. Such a tutor was looked upon as a member of the family. He remained year after year in the house, and accompanied the sons to the University. In his later days he obtained, as a rule, some kind of engagement, generally as secretary or steward to his former pupil, and at last a generous provision for his old age. We are perhaps justified in regarding *John Braniczky* as such pedagogue of the boys as early as the Cracow days ; we meet with him again as accompanying them in Bologna ; and he is afterwards adopted by the elder brother, *Jerome*, among those of his household (*familiaris*), and is also often employed by the uncle as a sort of confidential agent.*

We have been unable, notwithstanding zealous investigations, to discover immediate accounts of the course of study pursued by our boys in the archiepiscopal palace ; but, since we have no reason to suppose that this differed in any essential respect from that usual in Cracow in those days, we may suppose the impressions we have gained with regard to the prevailing form of instruction to hold good also so far as concerns the education of the nephews. We shall certainly not be far wrong in the conception formed from the school books which appeared in

* Zeissberg, p. 694.

Cracow at the time, which in their titles and the seldom wanting dedications are more loquacious than the school books of the present day, and thus in a *naïve* way disclose to the investigator many an interesting detail. A busy life prevailed also in this domain in Poland's capital at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Very soon after the discovery of the art of printing disciples of this art had arrived in Poland, of course almost all of them Germans, as is manifest from the names *Haller*, *Hochfeder*, *Unger*, *Scharffenberger*, etc. They had set up their offices in Cracow. In the second quarter of the century their most lively activity in the issuing of books may be said to begin ; but even from 1470 to 1525 there is no small number of works appearing in the book-markets of Frankfort, and Leipsic, and Thorn, and elsewhere, which bear on their title-page as the place of publication the name of the distant Cracow. As elsewhere at the time of the revival of literature, so in Poland too, the printers and publishers—offices, as a rule, combined in one and the same person—occupied a highly esteemed position among the Humanists. With the first love for the wondrous art was combined in these men the most ardent enthusiasm for the newly-awakened life of the ancient Greeks and Romans ; they were conscious of being specially called to kindle far and wide that which they deemed the sacred fire. Side by side with such men as *Aldus Manutius* in Venice, the *Frobens* in Basle, there is associated on equal terms the printer *Haller* in Poland, whose praise still resounds upon the title-pages of his books in the designation often to be met with, “ *This work was printed at the cost of the very noble and well-informed man Master John*

*Haller, citizen of Cracow, and most distinguished encourager of learned men.”**

The great number of school books appearing in Cracow in those days, particularly for the classic languages, enables us to infer the great demand existing, equally so as the early editions prepared of the Roman and even Greek writers. Special merit for such editions was here acquired by *John of Glogau*, Professor in the University,† and *John Sommerfeld*, pupil of Celtes.‡

Much stress was laid by the strict and accomplished uncle upon his nephews' acquiring the necessary attainments by means of severe discipline and training ; their great desire for learning, and the rich natural gifts which early manifested themselves, readily and easily seconded these requirements. The time was spent not in scientific studies alone ; in the case of the sons of the Polish nobility respect was had likewise to vigorous physical development. In early years the boy learned while in his father's castle to mount the horse, and soon knew how to urge him on with gleeful delight. The stables at the archiepiscopal palace were sufficiently extensive for the young barons not to need to forego in the city their wonted art. The wielding of arms, too, was not long an unknown acquirement to the free-born youth so soon as he had attained the strength

* “Impressum autem est hoc opus ad impensas optimi humanissimique viri Domini Joannis Haller, Civis Cracoviensis virorum doctorum fautoris excellentissimi.” Compare Jocher, *Obraz bibliographicus-historiczny literaturi i nauk w Polsce* (Wilno, 1840), i. 72.

† Compare Jocher, i. 14.

‡ Compare Žeissberg, *Die Polnische Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters* (Leipsic, 1873), p. 407, and Jocher, i. 111.

to handle them. Then also in due time his intense desire of taking part in the chase with his seniors was gratified. Out in the inhospitable forest, with its rude obstacles, or away in the damp moorland, the youthful body was invigorated and hardened, and the nerve early steeled, by the surmounting of so many a peril in the extensive woodlands of his native land. That which the boys had enjoyed at home, as regards the pleasures of the forest, they had not altogether to renounce during their stay in Cracow. The picturesque and wildly romantic Carpathians enticed to many a hunting excursion, and estates of the family on the maternal side (Lanskoron) adjacent thereto afforded an opportunity of yielding to this enticement.

So far as it is possible for us to form a clear conception, from the sparse information we have, as to the education of the Polish nobility of that day, it reminds us not a little of many a prominent feature in the education even to the present day in the ancient schools of England, which have been scarcely touched by the rapidly transforming hand of time. A kindred trait of great significance is presented to us in the fact that here, as there, in the houses of the nobility the son who is growing up learns that which is stirring in the minds of the fathers. As yet the young men are not allowed to take a personal part in the conversation; but they are silent attentive listeners, and acquire in this way, in social intercourse with those of riper age, almost without an effort a portion of their special refinement. Their fathers, then in Poland and still in England, were not idle spectators of that which was passing in the world; they felt themselves called to play an energetic part

in shaping the destinies of their country, and the country of a Pole was then at least equally significant, equally influential on the destinies of the age, as is in the present day that of England in the council of the nations. In the proud sense of pertaining to their nation, however, the members of both lands stand in reality upon a level. The almost exclusively so-called classical education has opened the eye and ear there of the sons of the Polish senator, here of the English lord, instead of weakening and destroying these intellectual organs by application to an excessive number of objects ; and with the understanding thus called forth, the young man then gains from intercourse and from life itself the necessary experience for his particular calling. Only the Polish youth were brought up in great fear and reverence for the grown-up and maturer members of the family ; with the liveliest feeling of affection there was blended profound respect for the will of the parents and of those who in their place conducted the education. And in this feature there comes forth a fair indication of the Slavonic mind, with its ready manifestation of obedience to its superiors, resting as this does upon a religious basis of character, as a parallel to the equally fair and vigorous sense of independence and impulse after freedom on the part of the Anglo-Saxon.

It was mainly in order to afford his nephews the abundant advantage which accrues to youth from an early association with the leading men of the fatherland that the royal chancellor and Archbishop had taken the highly promising lads out of their ancestral castle to himself in the city. The house of this distinguished man formed a place of rendez-

vous for the choicest society. His high position in itself drew the men of note on two sides to him for social intercourse. The bishops of the land visited the Archbishop, and at the abode of the Primate one would meet with the statesmen of the kingdom and the ambassadors of foreign courts. In addition to this, the personal character of *Laski* exerted a special power of attraction. His great learning, his mature judgment even on scientific questions, the high nobility of his sentiments, the whole vigour of his nature, combined with his pleasure in intellectual conversation, attracted to the hospitable house all the leading men of science and of art whom Cracow then contained within its walls ; and their number, in the day of Poland's bloom, was not small.

In the intellectual domain also the highly favoured land had just attained to the zenith of its development, was perhaps at that very time preparing to descend again from the height. The culture of the Polish nobility at this time drew to itself the wondering gaze of other nations ; that which outside of the land stirred the spirits found here a lively echo, open welcome, free asylum. The *Humanism*, too, awakened by the revival of the sciences in the fifteenth century, passed, in its travels through the cultured nations of Europe, over the Polish frontiers, settled in the hospitable land, and became quickly naturalised among the upper ranks of society ; specially in Cracow, whither, in the year 1400, King *Wladislaw* removed the University, already founded, in 1364, by *Casimir* the Great in the humid city of Kasimir. It had become a fashion with the sons of the nobility to pass a few years abroad in study at the main seats of science ; eager as they

were for the acquisition of learning and withal richly gifted, they entered with open mind into the far-reaching humanistic movement which presented itself, and returning to their great country, followed up in their solitary castles the new impulse they had received, sometimes in common with their impressionable sisters, along with whom, too, in past years they had in the ancestral castle studied the Latin language under the pedagogue of the house.

The restless and unrestrained love of travel which took possession of not a few Humanists, and led them to roam from place to place, to search in ancient monasteries for lost manuscripts, or to scatter in all directions the fresh-discovered knowledge, had brought many of these "errant people" to the distant Sarmatian land ; and great was their astonishment when they beheld in the strongholds, amidst the rude wilderness, so much refinement and intelligence ; when in Cracow and the other cities, peopled mainly by German burghers, they met with such busy life, such stirring commerce. The famous historian *Dlugosz* is able to relate to the almost omnipotent Bishop of Cracow of that time, *Zbigneus* (1450),—upon whom the Pope conferred the cardinal's hat,—that *Aeneas Sylvius*, afterwards Pope Pius II., one of the first writers of his day, and renowned for his Latin style, expressed his astonishment at the letter he had received from the supposed land of barbarians. *Aeneas* twitted the Germans present, he tells us, with the words that the epistle was a reproach to them ; for this epistle was so charming and full of thought, that he did not know whether he should himself succeed in framing a worthy reply. The letter was a proof that there

were in Poland splendid heads as regards both theory and practice, and he doubted if anybody could be found in all Germany who knew as well how to put the words together.*

When the distinguished Humanist *Filippo Buonaccorsa da Gemignano*, better known under his *nom de plume* of *Callimachus*, was driven out of Rome by Pope *Paul II.*, who was hostile to Humanism, he turned, impelled by curiosity and love of travel, to Poland (1470); in Cracow he entered himself as scholar at the University, and became tutor and afterwards familiar friend of the royal princes. His influence in diffusing Humanism in Poland was far from small; an Italian bishop composed on him the not altogether inapposite epigram:

Barbes were the family clept who drove out of Rome
 Callimachus,
But he in return has made into Romans barbarians.†

At the time when *Callimachus* was opening up a path to Humanism in Poland, there dwelt at Cracow *Conrad Celtes*, the true picture of an errant Humanist of that day, who in Rome had been a disciple of Pomponius Lætus, and had already obtained from the German emperor the doctor's hat, and yet did not disdain to be enrolled as a scholar at the Polish University (1497)—scholar and teacher, it is true, at the same time. While to-day he sat at the feet of *Albert of Brudzewo* and attended his lectures on

* Zeissberg, *Die Polnische Geschichtsschreibung*, p. 217.

† Compare Roscoe, *Life and Pontificate of Leo X.*, i. 54 of German translation. “Barbos fugiens ex urbe furores, barbara quæ fuerunt regna, Latina fecit.” Paul II. was, as is well known, a descendant of the house of Barbo, which often in the course of the ages gave occasion in the person of some of its representatives to similar biting language.

astronomy and mathematics, to-morrow he gathered around him a circle of enthusiastic students, to whom, as a university guest, he delivered lectures on poetry and rhetoric. Nay, he even transplanted an offshoot of the Platonic Academy from the banks of the Tiber to those of the Vistula, inasmuch as he founded in Cracow the Literary Society of the Vistula (*Sodalitas litteraria Vistulana*). A young Polish lady of noble birth, *Hasilina de Rzytonicz*, formed an intimate friendship with the German Humanist, the "Noric Elsula" celebrated in his odes (from whom he learnt the Polish language, while he taught her his native German). It is a beautiful letter which the Polish lady, incensed at such notoriety, addressed to the poet, an eloquent testimony to the delicate sense of honour and propriety which animated the Polish woman of that time and led her to shrink from every kind of publicity.*

Callimachus, it is true, no longer lived when young *Laski* was in Cracow for his education, and *Celtes*, too, had a decade before wandered back to Germany; but the influence of such men and of those like-minded with them did not come to an end with their departure: far and wide extended the circle of intellectual movement which they had set going, and the quickening surge touched with refreshing vigour that society which frequented the house of the Arch-

* The letter was composed in the Bohemian language, which was then much written and spoken in the castles of the Polish nobility, even on the part of ladies; Aschbach, in his charming paper on the earlier travelling years of Conrad Celtes, gives the original, accompanied by a translation (*Sitzungsbericht der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien*, lx. 147).

bishop, himself acquainted with *Callimachus* in his best years, and assuredly no stranger to the "Society of the Vistula." The growing lads, themselves devoted with most ardent zeal to the study of the classics, could only be advanced in a high degree by a surrounding like this.

Such was the intellectual atmosphere breathed by the young *Laskis* during the days of their education in Cracow. Their after-life affords evidence that this atmosphere braced and prepared them to enter with vigour upon their future life-task. They had reached in the course of time the years at which, having outgrown the age of home-training, they were to receive the finishing touch to their education at the University. The Polish University was no doubt in a position to have imparted this. It counted its students by many hundreds, and distinguished professors in the different departments contributed not a little to the reputation of the University. But it was the practice of the nobility to send their sons abroad for the completion of their studies. Paris, Bologna, Padua exerted greater attraction for the travel-loving Poles, than the national University. Formerly, too, the sister school of Prague had belonged to the number of these specially favoured seats of learning ; but the Hussite conflicts, and the edicts issued in consequence thereof against repairing to the Bohemian capital, now tainted with heresy, had told unfavourably upon this predilection. For our young *Laskis* the decision of the question as to the scene of their future studies rested with the uncle ; his official business at the time determined the choice of the University.

III.

THE FIRST STUDENT TRAVELS ABROAD.

I. IN ROME.

THE beginning of the year 1512 brought with it great festivities at Cracow, and specially a mighty influx of illustrious guests from various parts of Hungary and Poland. On the 8th of February was the coronation of the Princess *Barbara*, only daughter of *Stephen de Zapolya*, on the occasion of her marriage with King *Sigismund*. The wedding address was delivered by *John Staphileus (Staffileo)*,* despatched by Pope Julius II. to summon the King to send delegates to the Lateran Council. Two points were emphasised in the letter of invitation. First, it was to be the task of this, the last council before the Reformation, "to renew to her earlier dignity and true religion the Church, which ought to be without spot or wrinkle, and this by means of a reformation based upon the love of God and one's neighbour; and then to direct most zealously and with one accord all the forces of the whole of

* Afterwards employed by Pope Clement VII. in the negotiations with Henry VIII. (*Burnet, Reformation*, i., p. 40 note, Bohn's Edition).

Christendom against the enemies of the Christian name." * King *Sigismund* promised to send representatives to the proposed council, and nominated thereto as spiritual envoy the Archbishop of Gnesen, and as temporal envoy the Castellan of Kalisch, *Stanislas Ostrorog*. Neither delegate was in a great hurry to depart, and this indeed with the approval of the King; there was no ardent enthusiasm about despatching messengers to a council which at bottom was mainly a declaration of the Pope against the Council of Pisa, and from the reformatory efforts of which the people, already too often deceived, and now grown weary, looked for very little. There were but few foreign representatives present when, on the 3rd of May, 1512, the opening discourse was delivered by the most renowned pulpit orator of his time, *Egidius de Viterbo*. And indeed it were to be wished that there had been numerous and submissive hearers present to listen to this nervous address, in which the fearless general of the Augustin Friars summoned the Church and its then most militant head to grasp, with a view to obtaining the victory, the weapons given to her: religion, veracity, prayer, as the armour of faith and the sword of light.† Important negotiations in particular with the German order and its Grand Master, *Albert of Prussia*, and negotiations on account of the threatening war with the Russians, Tartars, and Turks, still detained the Primate of the kingdom at the Diet of Petrikow; in the general convention of Posen, too, by which these negotiations were followed, the Archbishop took part, at the wish

* *Tomiciana Acta* ("Epistolæ, legationes, responsa, actiones, res gestæ ser. Princip. Sigismundi"), ii. 15.

† Hardt, *Acta Conciliorum* (Parisiis, 1714), ix., p. 1579.

of the King ; only at the end of March, 1513, could *Laski* set out upon his journey Romewards.

The route led first to Cracow. Here he received the intelligence, communicated by the King, of the death of *Julius II.* *Sigismund* left it to the judgment of the ambassador whether he would be put from his journey or not by the unexpected event ; *Laski*, however, hastened the more to attend the assembly of ecclesiastical princes at the decisive hour. He left the Castellan of Kalisch behind to await the new credentials, and himself departed in the first week of April. The two elder nephews, *Jerome* and our *Johannes*, were to prosecute their studies under his eyes in Rome. *Stanislas*, as yet only twelve years old, remained for the present with his father. In place of him we hear of another companion in study, whom the Archbishop took, along with the two nephews, at his own charge. Although a few letters of his are lying before us, we are unable to discover anything definite with regard to this person. *Laski*, who supported at his own cost a lecturer on theology at the University of Cracow, and in a liberal manner supported learning and its disciples, furnished at the same time a number of young people with the means of pursuing their studies. Among these he may have been one, an intimate friend of the nephews, perhaps a member of the family bearing the escutcheon Korab (the cognisance of the Laskis).

It may be the two nephews were already equipped to begin with their uncle the long and tedious journey, or it may be that they only overtook him, with his companions in travel, in Bruck, on the Mur, whither, by way of Olmütz, *Stanislas of Ostrorog*

hastened to join the Archbishop with the new letters of authorisation. From the picturesquely situated little town in Styria the travelling procession, grown to somewhat large dimensions, first directed its way through the fair Alpine territories towards Venice, an entirely new unwonted scenery for the young men, who now for the first time, emerging from the plains of Poland, breathed the air of the mountains. A brief halt had to be made in the city of the lagoons ; *Laski* had to deliver a commission for his king to the Doge, *Leonardo Loredano*.* Poland and Venice were in arms at that time against the same powerful foe, only with the difference that, as *Laski* set forth to the Doge, Venice was fighting for its reputation, the augmentation of its power, or even from love of dominion ; Poland, on the other hand, because it regarded itself as the bulwark of Christendom against the heathen, and sought its highest prosperity not in passing over the frontiers of others, but in defending its own. From Venice the route then led without interruption to Rome, where they arrived at the beginning of June.

It was the seventh sitting of the Lateran Council,—on the 17th of June,—which *Laski* first attended, and at which he delivered his credentials. While his companion, *Stanislas of Ostrorog*, is mentioned in the protocol as amongst the ambassadors, we find *Laski* in the catalogue of the Patriarchs and assistants of the Pope. *Leo X.* received the Primate of Poland with great honours ; he placed him upon the important commission of the council, in which all questions touching the restoration of a universal

* *Tomiciana*, ii. 178.

peace among all Christian rulers and the extirpation of schism were discussed. In the eighth sitting, on the 19th of December, 1513, *Laski* had received the charge, in his capacity of assistant to the Pope, to communicate a papal letter to the assembly.* The contents of the letter are at the same time characteristic of the position of the uncle of the future Reformer. It addresses itself to the combating of prevalent unbelief, of widely extending doubt as to the immortality of the soul. *Leo*, the child of his age, so greatly irradiated with the beams of fortune as to be able to give his name to the time in which he lived, and just as little disposed as his friend and private secretary *Bembo* to fulfil the wish of the believers and condemn the work of the most noted philosopher *Pietro Pomponazzo*, which denied the immortality of the soul,† thought to be able to preserve the Church from the poison of unbelieving doctrine by conceding to its future ministers henceforth *only five years'* study of the *Humaniora*, after the lapse of which they were to apply themselves to the sciences of their profession.‡ By such trifling measures it was thought at Rome that the dark spirit could be exorcised and the Church protected and reformed, and this at a time when *Luther* was already delivering his enkindling lectures at Wittenberg on the Psalms and the Epistle to the Romans, and already experienced in himself and others the movings of that Spirit to which God has ever given the power of reforming the Church and the world.

We have not been able to discover the slightest

* Hardt, *Acta Concil.*, ix. 1719.

† Roscoe, iv. 252.

‡ Hardt, ix. 1719.

hint, either in Rome itself or in any other journeys which we have undertaken, as to the course of the studies pursued by our young friends in the capital. The single point of certainty, that they were with the uncle in Rome, we owe to a passage in a letter accidentally lighted on ; and with regard to their sojourn of about fifteen months, we are limited to presumptions derived from this side of the intellectual life of the city.

The last twenty years had not been favourable to the liberal sciences in Rome. A breath, pestilential for all sound development of sober science, had proceeded from *Alexander VI.* Subsequently indeed *Julius II.* had shown, after his manner in majestic style, taste and intelligence for all the arts of peace, but yet he loved still more to draw the sword for the liberation of Italy, for the aggrandisement of the Ecclesiastical States ; and amidst the constant din of war the studies could not flourish, since these call for quiet and composure. The favourable time dawned at length under the polished and brilliant *De Medici* (*Leo X.*). From the beginning he directed all his interest to the Gymnasium founded in Rome seventy years before. In the very year of our young students' residence in Rome this institute of higher learning possessed nearly a hundred professors of repute,* who delivered lectures on theology, civil and ecclesiastical jurisprudence, medicine, ethics, logic, and mathematics. The main attention in the Gymnasium was at that time directed to the study of the Greek language. The renowned *John Lascaris*, called to the office by the

* Roscoe, ii. 109.

Pope immediately on his accession, presided over the Greek college in Rome, in which one of his most distinguished disciples, *Marcus Musurus*, subsequently taught at the invitation of the Pope. It is certainly to be supposed that our youthful friends attended the lectures as well at the Gymnasium as at the Greek college on the Esquiline Hill, the more so since the Pope was zealously exerting himself by the conferring of privileges and immunities to attract pupils to the institution, to whom the professors were required to deliver lectures in the morning and afternoon, and that without interruption by the numerous festivals. If the elements of the Greek language had not already been acquired in Cracow, abundant opportunity for acquiring the same now presented itself; we may even reasonably suppose that our Johannes, by this time a lad of fourteen, was already introduced to the writings of Plato, specially since *Musurus* had in 1513 issued the first edition of his works from the press of the renowned Manutius.

How gladly, however, would we pierce the taciturn obscurity and get to know what impression the sojourn in Rome produced upon these susceptible young spirits. But nothing whatever is told us on this point. And yet it was a stirring time, and one profoundly affecting the destinies of Rome, this eve of the Reformation, in which, from the prevailing sultriness of the atmosphere, many a one already anticipated the coming storm. Did the stay there pass away entirely without a trace for our young Poles? Did they receive during these years of so great susceptibility an afflatus of the breath which streamed forth from the art there celebrating its

triumphs? *Raphael* had just then completed his wondrous masterpiece, full of earnest thoughtfulness, full of pure beauty, in the *Camera del Segnatura*; in the Sixtine Chapel the scaffoldings had been removed, and the astonished glance might contemplate unhindered the creations called forth by *Michael Angelo*, like a revelation in the province of art. To the nephews of the Primate of Poland these now hallowed spaces were accessible; did they listen in rapt enthusiasm to the unique language in which these two favoured disciples of art interpreted the spiritual life of man, the acts of God as made known in Scripture? We know that, with a fine gift for language, the three scholars quickly acquired the Italian tongue. And what impression was then made upon them by the sweet tones of a *Petrarch*, or, still more, by the majesty, the force, the sublime splendour and truth of a *Dante*, whose expositor *Ariosto* had just before quitted the Eternal City? Unhappily we receive no answer to these and so many other questions which crowd upon us, and are almost tempted to suppose that the young men were but little stirred by the spirit which makes us moderns look back with greater longing upon those days and their enjoyment of art, than was experienced by many of the contemporaries themselves. If this conjecture be well founded, we may suppose that our *Johannes*, in his childlike spirit, remained unmolested by all the godless doings which in those unbelieving days perhaps nowhere more shamelessly displayed themselves than under the eyes of the supposed vicegerent of God. No passage in his later writings gives rise to the suggestion that at this period he saw and heard that which *Luther*

witnessed on his pilgrimage to Rome, that which in the narrative of *Boccacio* induced the Jew to undergo baptism. The mysterious veil which God Himself places over the eyes of youth for its protection may have concealed from the lad the sight of a world alienated from God, in which the ministers of the Most High were just those who, with the greatest effrontery, held up to ridicule all that was sacred, and so heaped abomination upon abomination that the confession was drawn forth which *Luther* in that very place once heard from the mouth of papal courtiers, "It is not possible this should continue longer : it *must* break up."*

The uncle did not wish his nephews to complete their studies in Rome. For Johannes in particular a visit to the neighbouring world-famed University of Bologna was of importance for the prosecution of his studies in ecclesiastical law. The Primate himself was compelled to attend for a while longer the sittings of the council, and to perform the many and very difficult commissions entrusted to him from his native land to be fulfilled at the papal court (which for months in succession showed itself unfavourable to the wishes of Poland), now alone, since as early as the end of the year 1513 his companion, the Castellan of Kalisch, had, at the King's command, journeyed to Spain, and thence had returned direct to his own country. Towards the close of the year 1514,† *John Braniczki*, the tutor of the young men,

* *Luther*, *Works of* (Erlangen Edition), lxii. 435.

† Perhaps we might place the time as late as the middle of October, since the beginning of the lectures to the Decretists in Bologna was fixed for the day after St. Luke's (19th October).

received instructions to remove with them to Bologna.

The distinguished party required four days to reach Bologna from Rome, probably by way of the pass of Furlo. They would travel slowly by a route that presented so much worthy of notice on these breezy days of the later autumn.

2. IN BOLOGNA.

The first few days of their sojourn at Bologna were spent by our friends in the public hostelry, until they could find a dwelling suitable to their requirements. Some letters, accidentally lighted upon, afford us an attractive glimpse of the quiet life of study of these our young friends in that city.

We see first certain new-comers entering the circle of our old acquaintances. In May, 1514, the Archbishop had sent his marshal, *Nicholas Wolski*, Castellan of Sochawczew, a man very faithfully attached to him, and, moreover, afterwards related by marriage, to the King of Poland with an important message. In the autumn (8th September) the Polish general *Constantine of Ostrorog* inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Russians, under the Grand Duke *Wassili Ivanovitch*, at Orsza. With this victory, too, the affairs of Poland at the papal court took a favourable turn, as *Laski* at once began to experience in his negotiations. It was in truth a victory not only over the threatening foe of the distant Poland : for Rome it was still more a victory of the faithful son of the Romish Church over the schismatic. In the joy of his heart, and with a view to maintain the favourable sentiment in Rome, the King sent the

Archbishop's marshal with a number of captive Russian nobles, to make them a present to the Pope. A royal letter of safe conduct was to afford to the Castellan of Sochawczew protection on the journey to Rome for himself and his somewhat singular gift to the Pope. In Vienna they were in no humour for regarding the letter of safe conduct ; the victory at Orsza had thwarted the policy of Austria, and in annoyance thereat they detained *Wolski* and his prisoners at Hall, near Innsbruck. The Polish ambassador indeed was permitted to resume his journey to Rome without molestation ; but the chains were taken off the ten prisoners, and they were sent back by way of Lubeck to the Grand Duke of Moscow, in order in this way at least to give expression to the uneasy feeling at the unexpected issue of the battle. In Rome this procedure of the Kaiser was by no means approved. Leo X., in a letter to Maximilian, which arrived a little too late, demanded the surrender and forwarding of the prisoners ; and the Fathers assembled at the council, with the Pope at their head, celebrated the brilliant victory of Poland as a victory of the Church over the heterodox.*

The favourable occasion of the journey, which followed the route by way of Bologna, was turned to account for convoying a few students to our friends : first, the youngest brother, *Stanislas*, who was now thought by his father old and matured enough to pursue his studies in Bologna. With him arrived at the same time a brother of that *Johannes* as to whose family and connection with the lineage of

* Compare *Tomiciana*, iii. 7, 333.

Korab we are still, as before, in ignorance ; he too, *Stanislas* by name, like his brother, was a student at the charge of the Archbishop. Further, *Wolski* brought with him two young sons of the family *Radziwill*, *Stanislas* and *Johannes* ; they had already dwelt a while at Vienna, and now were to prolong their studies in Italy. The teacher of *Stanislas*, *Matthias*, who probably had superintended the studies of the young *Laski* left behind alone in his father's castle, had likewise come with them, and now remained in Bologna. Thus the little household consisted of ten persons : the three nephews, the two *Radziwills*, the two distant relations ; in addition to these the tutor *Braniczki*, the teacher *Matthias*, just referred to, and a physician of the same name, whom the thoughtful uncle had appointed to the pupils entrusted to his care. It is remarkable that another distant kinsman, bearing the arms of Korab, *Matthias Slywnicki*, who was at that time in Bologna for the purpose of studying Roman law, probably, too, at the Archbishop's charges, was not received at the round table of common entertainment ; perhaps that teacher *Matthias* and this *Slywnicki* were one and the same person, made in this brief account to sustain two characters, according as he was occupied as teacher or learner. The Archbishop even in after-years valued very highly this excellent gift of learning, which abundantly repaid to him the sacrifices made for its cultivation. As Doctor of Laws (*Utriusque Juris Doctor*), *Slywnicki* became Canon of Gnesen, archdeacon at Kalisz, and, lastly, *Laski*'s chancellor and provost of Posen, and by his scientific labours contributed no little to the superseding of the Magdeburg law in Poland.

Braniczki commends the young men to the Archbishop as being very industrious and virtuous (*adolescentes studiosissimi et virtuosi sunt*). A great zeal for the acquisition of learning animates the two nephews, who are attached to each other in heartfelt love. What the one wishes to learn, the other also will learn, although now, owing to their different branches of study, they must follow separate paths. In point of ability *Jerome* surpasses them all; he merits without qualification the encomium of a very gifted youth. Concerning his beloved brother, our *Johannes*, the testimony is given, that he is his tutor's dearest pupil, a youth of the highest integrity. *Braniczki* declares he has never seen such an one, and gives utterance to the wish that a long life may be granted him: "Carissimus dominus Joannes nepos R. P. tuæ, ibi est summa virtus, nunquam vidi hujus modi puerum; utinam esset longe vivens." This is the first direct testimony we have been able to obtain concerning our hero; it touches that chord of his nature which lifelong has given forth such a pure entrancing note, a note which a decade later, as a most sweet resonance of home, affected with deep longing the innermost soul of a man like *Erasmus*, to which we shall ourselves more than once in the following pages, when in full maturity the noble form shall come nearer to us in word and deed, listen with delight. Nor did this nobility and charm of disposition, which so early proceeded in a surprising manner from the youth, exert its influence upon those only who came in contact with him for the first time: equally did it exert this upon the nearest occupants of the house, who, in the intimacy of

a common life, received undisturbed the same agreeable impression from the moral purity of this personality. After the two brothers had been separated for a time *Jerome* wrote to his uncle from Bologna: "When I met my beloved brother *Johannes* again here, I became a new man; by him all my weariness of life was driven far away, all tedium disappeared, and all delight in labour returned with him in enhanced degree. He has augmented the stores of his mind and his knowledge, which he has manifested in discourse of prose and verse, and that far beyond the measure of other young men, during his sojourn in Germany; he has certainly not idled away his time and counted the sand, but has read and listened to the most distinguished authors. One cannot but admire the power of memory, the perseverance, the gravity [*constantia et severitas*] with which the youth is inspired, so that we are all filled with respect and reverence for him [*ut eum omnes facile timemus et veneramur*];* one thing we most earnestly implore, that many years of life may be granted to him. I do not make this boast of him as my brother, but rather as a good and most honourable young man, with whom, so long as we are together here, I will advance in common in the good arts with all the power of my manhood." That the brother also, in like manner as the preceptor, does not suppress the wish for long life to this rare youth, inspires us with the apprehension that the bodily sufferings with which

* If I might recall to memory a theologian of the nineteenth century who also from youth up compelled the same reverential homage for his person, the noble form of my ever-to-be-remembered tutor, Nitzsch, presents itself to my mind. Compare Beyschlag, *Karl Immanuel Nitzsch* (Berlin, 1872), p. 7.

we see the overtired man afterwards visited may have thus early made their appearance.

But we must return to our scholar and his studies at the seat of the Muses in Bologna.

As Poles our youthful students were counted to belong to the University of the *Ultramontani*, which, in opposition to the University of the *Citramontani*, consisted of scholars from eighteen different non-Italian nations, and enjoyed as such full civic rights, together with the great privileges which Bologna, in opposition to the Sorbonne, conceded to the scholars. For in Bologna the students from ancient time formed the Corporation, and elected the heads thereof from their own midst ; the tutors were subject to them.* Originally only a twofold School of Law, there were added, as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century, an Art School for the Philosophers and Medical Men, and further, as a fourth High School, the Theological School, founded by Innocent VI. in the second half of the same century, which by a peculiarity was constituted after the model of the Sorbonne, so that in it not the scholars, but the professors, formed the Corporation. Alike in the School of Law as in the School of Arts and that of Theologians had our Johannes to attend lectures, since, in the first place, the humanistic studies had not yet come to a close ; and then the further studies, on canonical law and that which the theological faculty afforded, were superadded.

Unhappily we cannot accompany our young priest in his professional studies at Bologna. All attempts

* Cf. thereon Savigny, *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts im Mittelalter* (Heidelberg, 1816), iii., p. 141.

to get into a right track there, for presenting us with a picture of the theological studies of that time, have proved failures. It would not have been an attractive picture ; the student certainly could not in those days draw any enthusiasm for his " precious office " (1 Tim. iii. 1) from the theological lectures, which were limited almost entirely to the knowledge of canonical law. *Cochlœus*, in after-years so bitter an opponent of Luther, and exerting himself with more than importunateness to guard the far-off Poland against the poison of the Reformation, was then living in Bologna for the sake of his studies ; after the lapse of only a short time, he was already weary of his theological pursuits at the University. To his benefactor, the renowned *Wilibald Pirkheimer*, in Nuremberg, whose nephew he accompanied as tutor to Bologna, he describes the condition of the theologic studies in his—certainly a little overdrawn and altogether too peevish—elegiac epistle : "It is a misery to be occupied here with the sacred science, without a tutor, without books, without resources. The lectures are delivered by pitiable monks ; with them I will not lose my time : they are nothing but sophists ; they chase after shadows. I attend no lectures, therefore, but keep myself shut up at home."* Like complaints are uttered with regard to the teachers of canonical law. The most learned of them has no teaching gift ; the other speaks so low that he cannot be understood ; the third is so learned that he often digresses to the most extraneous subjects ; a fourth is a twaddler ; a fifth a young man without information.

* Heumann, *Documenta litteraria* (Altdorfii, 1758), p. 12.

If we abate somewhat from the arrogant and disdainful judgment of the German, prejudiced as he is against the Italians, there is still left a residuum which is confirmed from other quarters. The theological studies were in those days far outstripped by the humanistic. While in the latter a new life was awakening, like the shaking and moving which the prophet beheld when he looked upon the dry bones; while here, in a beauty unimagined before, the world of the Greeks and Romans arose as from a grave before the intoxicated vision, and all the intellectual activity of the contemporaries was directed, as with gigantic power and almost spasmodic energy, to the raising of this so wonderful treasure; theology, on the other hand, had fallen behind and moved on in the primitive ruts, untouched by all that which, like an earthquake, stirred the hearts of contemporaries to their depths, drifting along in an almost guileless way, without a single foreboding, towards the point at which its miner's-candle of scholasticism is extinguished by the gust of the new age.

Precisely such old renowned universities as Bologna are readily exposed to the temptation of clinging rigidly to that which is traditional. It may have been monks who piled up around the established dogmas this infinite series of questions, of reasons and counter-reasons, of definitions, distinctions, syllogisms, and corollaries, as the autumn wind covers a grave with withered leaves; but such affliction must have been unendurable to a youthful spirit, which had already for years past breathed in the clear, pure, bracing air of the ancient authors, two-fold affliction at a time when in all the domains of life a new movement was astir, and scholasticism

likewise, in more than one place, manifested the germs of dissolution. Even the papal edict, which the uncle had read a year before to the assembled Fathers of the council, had proclaimed a rupture with the essential character of scholasticism, however much it is the case that this edict is still penetrated by the self-consciousness which animated scholasticism in its palmy days, and, under the impulse of this feeling, simply decrees that which one feels one's self too weak to prove. The name of only one theologian, at whose lectures our scholar was certainly wont to attend, have we been able to discover ; it is *Chrysostomus Casalenus*. *Leo X.* had permitted *Peter Pomponatius* to write a defence of his work, already mentioned, on the immortality of the soul, only on condition that this professor at Bologna should add oppositions thereto and print them along with it. Unfortunately we could not find this treatise (*defensorium*). Apart from the interest inspired by such a *sic et non* writing (2 Cor. i. 18), issued as it was at the papal command, and shedding great light upon the spirit of the time, the book would have been further valuable as enabling us to form a conception of the master at whose feet our *Laski* sat.

For the exposition of Holy Scripture Bologna also possessed a professor's chair ; but for a long time past this important branch had become degenerated or overgrown into an exposition of the exposition, in which the subtlety of the prevalent theologic tendency found a wide and pleasant field for running riot, now indeed no longer an authority entirely unquestioned. As early as 1516 there appeared in Genoa a *psalterium* in four languages ;

two years before this the first volume of the great Complutensian Bible of Cardinal *Ximenez* had already appeared, with a dedication to Pope *Leo X.*; and *Erasmus'* Greek edition of the New Testament was already in the hand of many in Italy. The book was read and explained, like so many another newly discovered Greek author, as we should say from a purely philological point of view, without measuring the full range which this study would so soon have over there beyond the mountains. Men began also to read the Old Testament in the original language. They might appeal in favour of this step, so far as Bologna was concerned, to that ordinance of *Clement V.* at the Council of Vienne (1311), according to which six professors of the Oriental languages were to be appointed, to this university among others, not in order to render possible to the clergy an understanding of the Scripture in the original tongue, but in order to form skilled champions against Jews and Mohammedans. This ordinance had become almost forgotten in the course of time. But now, the same year in which our friends went to Bologna, *Theseus Ambrogius*—a sort of Mezzofanti of the sixteenth century, who is said to have been acquainted with eighteen languages—was appointed by the Pope Professor of Oriental Literature.* We know positively that our young theologian did not avail himself of the favourable opportunity thus afforded him, for it was almost a decade later that he learnt the Hebrew; the Archbishop might naturally conjecture that but little profit was to be derived from the knowledge of this language for the

* Roscoe, ii. 151.

career which he designed to open to his favourite nephew in the Church of his native land.

A special activity prevailed during the residence of our friends at Bologna in the province of philosophy, in which province a quick-sighted eye might even then have seen that spirit most astir which brought to a close the mediæval period, and powerfully furthered for Italy its transformation into the form of the Renaissance. We can hardly suppose that our young theologian remained at this early period unmoved by the working of this spirit. Until then *Aristotle* and his dialectics had dominated the thought of men through the centuries, exerting an influence such as certainly no other far-famed philosopher had ever exerted. The researches of the Humanists had brought to light fresh writings of the master, which considerably extended the circle of their knowledge. Specially since the fall of Constantinople (1453) had an acquaintance with the writings of *Plato* likewise become widely diffused in Italy ; and so many a "Platonic academy" attested the enthusiastic affection cherished for this world-famed sage. Both heroes of the intellect found their ardent admirers, not at first in a sense mutually exclusive, but the longer the time that elapsed the sharper became the accentuation of the difference. There is certainly a diverse tendency of mind in the two *Dioscuri*, that primeval divergence which was also manifested in the most vigorous days of scholasticism. In Bologna itself main representatives of the two tendencies were then engaged in teaching. *Alexander Achilinus*, himself a Bolognese, who died in his native town in 1518, exerted considerable power. Ritter judges of him that his philosophical

writings still bear altogether the stamp of scholasticism, and concede to the renowned *Averroes* a great influence upon his investigations.* But yet doubt as to the soundness of its propositions already obtrudes. *Achilinus* walks in the ways of a *Duns Scotus*; he espouses Realism again; *Aristotle* speaks to him in this sense. Side by side with him there was teaching at the University in those years the *Peter Pomponatius* already several times mentioned, still, it is true, involved in scholastic tenets, but yet more decidedly accessible to doubt. Through the instrumentality of the well-known Platonist *Ficinus*, he became familiarised with Plato's writings; he suspects indeed that the two famous sages do not in all respects agree; but there is wanting to him the earnest impulse of truth for following up the difference and surrendering himself to the consequences so important for that age. *Pomponatius* often in Bologna engaged in a scientific contest with *Achilinus*. "It is related that they measured themselves with each other, and the former sought by means of witty turns to escape the force of the scientific arguments which the latter knew how to urge."

It would be a great satisfaction if we could only discover now whether these intellectual conflicts and scientific endeavours exerted any influence upon the development of our friend, and if so, of what kind. But all effort to come upon the track of farther information as to his course of study at Bologna proved in vain; and it remained to us only to make the modest attempt, above presented, to combine in

* Ritter, *Geschichte der Philosophie* (Hamburg, 1850), ix., p. 382 seq.

† Ritter, *ibid.*, p. 427.

one the sparse notices, as regards so many questions unsatisfactory in their nature, which lie scattered here and there. We are enabled therefrom at least to recognise the nature of the influence under which *Laski* was brought—or perhaps, to express ourselves more cautiously, may have been brought—during his stay in Bologna in connection with his theological studies.

Nor does our young theologian seem to have found any particularly excellent models in the preacher's office at the High School. We are again led to fall back upon the—as it seems to us, exaggerated—statements of *Cochlœus*, as he lashes the style of preaching with the following drastic strokes: “Most of the fast preachers are, if I may so say, rather buffoons or declamatory strolling players than preachers, than apostles, than Augustines. While many, surpassing each other in a foolish manner in gesticulations and in voice, think they are imitating Paul or Cicero, they yet speak and act only hypocritically to the people. Is it to be wondered at that they accomplish nothing in this manner? When they wish to be passionate, they gallop through the discourse without observing a comma; to and fro they move their heads like crows, spring up, run about the pulpit here and there, cry out, fight with their arms, turn their backs upon the congregation, specially when they pray for the congregation to the little crucifix standing behind them; outwardly they weep, inwardly they laugh and please themselves infinitely.”*

Not entirely undisturbed by external things did

* Heumann, p. 10.

the student years at Bologna pass away. A few events must also have projected themselves into the quiet life of our familiar friends. For the most part they lived a life of retirement. In order to attach his pupils to their home, *Braniczki* had obtained a pair of guitars, with the art of playing upon which the *Radziwills* and *Laskis* were not unacquainted ; a passage from a letter of our friend in later time to *Beatus Rhenanus* shows that he heartily loved music, and was no stranger to a theoretic knowledge of it. But the position of the families of our young Polish nobles in their native land was too distinguished to admit of their being able to spend their days unobserved in the city of the Muses, intent only upon their studies. The Cardinal Archbishop of Bologna, *Achilles de Grassis*, was protector of Poland at the papal see, and the uncle maintained a continual familiar intercourse with this exalted personage, an acquaintance which assuredly also served the nephews in good stead.

As is well known, *Leo X.* held in 1516 the renowned and momentous interview with *Francis I.* in Bologna. From the time of the glorious victory of the chivalrous hero and King at Marignano, the Pope was obliged to take every step for entering into friendly intercourse with the victor ; the meeting at Bologna was to give its expression to these endeavours. Great privileges were here granted to the French king. The Pragmatic Sanction, subject of so much controversy, was indeed annulled ; but the most important privileges and immunities conveyed by it were renewed by a special Act, which then became the basis of the "freedom of the Gallican

Church." These days were of importance for the subsequent career of our Johannes, from the fact that here, as we strongly suspect, the acquaintance of the younger brother *Stanislas* with the King of France was formed, by whom brought about we have not the material for learning. Upon many a name we might fix by conjecture ; of what avail would it be, so long as we could arrive at no certainty ?

A few weeks after this august meeting serious collisions had arisen among the Bolognese students between the different nationalities. The Germans turned out against the Lombards ; quickly the young fiery blood had recourse to the sword, to the unwieldy musket ; for two days the fierce turmoil lasted on the streets. On the side of the Germans were ranged, among other nationalities, also the Hungarians and the Poles. Whether our chivalrous Poles, too, expert as they were in the handling of weapons, betook themselves to the sword, we cannot say ; at any rate, however, they heard in these stormy days a manly German knight, as advocate of the Germans, and thus also of the Poles allied with them, vigorously represent before the partial governor the injustice done to them ; it was no less a man than *Ulrich von Hutten*.* We have not met with any hint, either in *Laski* or *Hutten*, which might lead to the supposition of a mutual personal acquaintance between the two during their contemporaneous stay in Bologna. Numerous as are the points of contact which might be discovered in the character of the two men, equally far-reaching

* Compare the account which *Hutten* furnishes to *Erasmus* in the standard edition of *Hutten's works* by *Böcking*, i. 146.

are the differences, and in particular on *that* point from which a radiant light falls upon the pure form of our *Laski*, who was likewise younger by more than a decade than the errant German knight. The mention of Hutten's name gives rise for us to the question whether indeed the lightning-flash penetrated to the dwelling of our Poles which proceeded from the "Letters of Obscure Men" (first issued at that time),* and flamed with bright glare in the whole intellectual horizon, the incomparable note of the morning, telling that a deep dark night is past, and, in the victorious wit of Humanism, that dawn is breaking, which announces a new and fairer day. In the composition of the second part of these letters *Hutten* had a considerable share,† and that while he was at Bologna. With the portraits of the letter-writers the German hero had become sufficiently acquainted during his travels and journeyings through Germany; and if the features of these obscure men had paled for him in the sunny Italy, Rome and Bologna could furnish him with substitutes, for these obscure men wandered homeless throughout the world; their form met one in Cologne as well as in Bologna, with a Latinity which ever and anon reminds of the German of the Polish Jews, like the Jews too, an errant people, without a native land, and with a jargon half dead, half living. When we call to mind the description of the fast preachers, as given us by *Cochlaeus*, and consider what a deep impression this appearance made upon *Hutten* in

* "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum." See Sir William Hamilton's *Discussions on Philosophy* (1852), p. 204, etc.

† For the proof see Strauss, *Ulrich von Hutten* (Leipsic, 1858), i., p. 266 seq.

Bologna, with his overflowing wit, his talent for satire, methinks it is as though, clothed with flesh and blood, they stared upon us in Hutten's letters.

The summer of 1516 was oppressively hot.* It appears that our Johannes, who, as already indicated, was not of very robust health, was driven away by the burning heat to more northerly regions. The great holidays of six weeks' duration began indeed in Bologna only on the day of Mary's nativity (7th September);† but *Johannes* may well, on account of the extreme heat and his suffering condition of body, have closed his studies earlier, and have prepared for a journey to the cooler north. At any rate, we refer to this summer-time the notice in the letter of *Jerome* lying before us in manuscript, which unhappily contains neither day nor year of its composition, and in which we have found the beautiful expression of joy at the return of the beloved brother. As to what parts of Germany were visited in this journey, what important personages he became acquainted with, nothing can be learnt, despite all researches made.

The residence in Bologna was hastening to an end. In most cases strangers remained three years at the University. So greatly had this become the custom that every scholar had the right to remain three years in his dwelling, during which time the owner of the house could not give him warning.‡ Our Poles did not remain their full triennium. The uncle had left Rome as early as the first days of August, 1515; and, after a brief stay in Vienna and then with the Cardinal Archbishop of Gran, had

* Heumann, p. 9.

† Savigny, iii. 232.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 185

made his entry into Cracow, where the prelates and prebendaries had received him in state at the gate of the city nearest to the Wawel. For the support of his nephews and students at Bologna, he had deposited sufficient money with the banking-house of the *Fuggers* in Rome. He had continued in uninterrupted lively intercourse with them ; in the year 1517 he recommends in his testament his nephew *Johannes*, student at Bologna, to his successor in the archiepiscopal see. He speaks of him as possessing a studious, devout, and grateful spirit.*

In the following year a disconnected passage in this same testament occasions us surprise. It may belong to the beginning of the year, and the incident relate to the close of 1517. "Our nephew *Johannes* has, in consequence of I know not what error, persuasion, or occasion, withdrawn from the University of Bologna ; nor do I know whither he has repaired. I fear that I shall be involved in costs from this business."† Our *Johannes* cannot have been long absent from Italy ; for it was in the spring of 1518 that he was excommunicated at Rome. His cousin, *Martin Rambiewski*, it must be known, had drawn a bill in Rome for six hundred and seventy gulden in the name of our *Johannes*, of which the latter knew nothing. *Rambiewski* seems to have fallen into somewhat doubtful society in Rome, and to have laid out more money in country pleasures and the purchase of expensive pictures than his means admitted, and so, pressed by his creditors and led astray in an evil moment, to have had recourse to the expedient hazardous in itself,

* Zeissberg, *Johannes Laski u. sein Testam.*, p. 679.

† *Ibid.*, p. 689.

and fraught with such serious consequences for our *Johannes*.* Since the latter was unable to pay the sum, of the borrowing of which he had no suspicion, on the day on which it fell due, he was visited with the punishment usual in similar cases, until such time as the uncle had cancelled the debt on behalf of his innocent nephew.† For the punishment of such offences at that time in Rome excommunication was, as we may well say, abused. It was degraded to a simple measure of police, a sort of arrest for debt, without any further disagreeable consequences, even for a priest, so soon as the occasion was removed. In this light also the uncle looked upon the punishment. In a pretty detailed letter to his king, in which he touched upon this case too, he says, "Many clergy as well as laity in high position have already been visited with this punishment, without its being possible on that account to designate them as bad men. Often even have emperors and kings been laid under this penalty, without any kind of stain being attached to them thereby."‡

And upon our *Johannes*, too, it inflicted no stigma, specially since he suffered it so undeservedly. When also in after-years, upon a much more serious occasion, he drew down upon himself the punishment of expulsion, albeit unpronounced, it was yet powerless to hurt his character, or by such imperious decision of the Church to separate him from his Lord and Saviour.

* Compare also *Tomiciana*, vii. 23.

† Zeissberg, p. 701.

‡ *Tomiciana*, vi. 68.

IV.

AT HOME AGAIN.

AFTER an absence of five years, our *Johannes* returned to his native land. We have accompanied him on his student travels, and have, so far as the obscurity of the history has not obliterated all traces, followed his footsteps. Wherever a happy fate has granted us to look him more closely in the face, we recognise the same charming traits of the youth who, pure and severe in morals, goes his way with cheerful heart ; whom his high descent, his powerful kindred, do not release from earnest studies ; who employs his time as one who has to rely only upon his own exertions for his advancement. We should on so many, many points have been glad of more perfect knowledge of his course of study, in order perhaps to see, already standing before the eyes of the youth in these days, and in his habit of thought, the goal which the man afterwards apprehended with such firm hand. We were obliged to content ourselves with such small results from researches widely extended. Whether more fortunate and thorough investigations would afford us fuller insight into the development of the inner life of our hero is questionable, because that age is

only too niggardly for our wishes in its communications with regard to such mental conditions.

What proofs of his maturity for entering upon his chosen calling *Laski* brought home from the University, we know not. Perhaps we have not to set down this ignorance exclusively to the sparseness of the communications made to us. Examinations in the sense of our anxious, careful age were not then required in order to pass the threshold of official dignities and burdens. The examination for the obtaining of the title of licentiate or that for doctor of canon law *Laski* did not undergo in Bologna,* probably because he was not disposed to undergo it, inasmuch as his prospective mode of life lay in another direction, in which he could dispense with such dignities. It was of service to him only to have resided for a certain time at a distinguished university for the pursuit of his studies. How these years were then actually employed mattered not much, specially if one enjoyed the protection of influential personages. This aid was certainly not wanting to the son of a distinguished palatine, nephew of the Primate and Archbishop of Gnesen; and the first ripened fruits of such a relationship had already fallen into his lap before he had crossed the frontiers of his native land. Of so many reproaches made to the Archbishop of Gnesen by his many and decided opponents, who were for the most part envious of him, there is not one which has a greater amount of foundation than when he is accused of nepotism in availing himself

* The requirements for a degree are described by Savigny, iii. 193.

of his exalted position to advance his relatives in their career.

The uncle, as already related, had returned to Poland from the Lateran Council in 1515, loaded with tokens of personal favour on the part of the Pope and of recognition of his exalted position. Among other marks of honour, he was himself as the first, and each of his successors in the archiepiscopal see in turn, appointed a *legatus natus*, a high distinction granted only to a few bishoprics, and one which at the same time invests the occupant for the time being of the archiepiscopal throne with the rank and dignity of a papal nuncio, who as such also has direct communication with the pope and the ruler of the land. The kindly Archbishop was not slow to raise his nephew to the first round of the ladder to whose topmost round he had himself climbed, and which he was minded one day at his death to yield up to the much-promising young man. Even while the scholar was pursuing his studies in Bologna, he made him canon (*canonicus*) at the Collegiate Institute in Leczyc, the principal town of the palatinate of the same name, in which the father held the dignity of palatine from the year 1506 to this year of the appointment of his son as canon (1517). The son will assuredly not have resided, any more than the father had done, in this unwholesome place, surrounded on every side by swamps. On the 30th of December, 1517, a further and higher rank was added. The young man, who was preparing for his homeward journey, was nominated coadjutor to the Dean of Gnesen.*

* According to the excerpts from the "Acta Capit.

And it seemed as though even yet sufficient honours were not placed upon the youthful head, which was still in Bologna, bending over the folios of canonical law. In the same fateful year in which the hammer-strokes on the Castle-church at Wittenberg reverberated with such powerful and lasting effect through the whole edifice of the church, *Leo X.* granted to the youth of hardly eighteen years the title to the custodianship of Leczyc, and in addition to this the canonicate of Cracow and Plock.* Enough benefices, truly, for one at the beginning of his career!

The securing of the papal ratification to these offices for his nephew was not accomplished by the uncle on moderate terms. We are hardly any longer surprised or astonished when we unexpectedly light upon an out-of-the-way passage in which we find the charges for such a commission at the papal see of those days entered with an innocence as great as though it had only been a question of the purchase of a sheep : in Rome everything was disposed of for money in those days ; and only he who paid the price obtained the simoniacal wares. "Fourteen hundred gulden"—so the careful uncle enters in his testament under the year 1517—"changed into a thousand gold gulden, have I sent to Rome for the prosecution of the business regarding the custodianship of Plock and Leczyc. My marshal, *Nicholas Wolski*, knows the order" [*ordinem*] ; probably the word indicates among what series of officials and in what gradation the sum has

Gnesn." very kindly furnished to me by the Canon Korytkowski.

* Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Poloniæ*, ii., p. 378.

to be divided] "of distribution of this thousand gulden; and this is made in the interest of my nephew *Johannes*." *

The benevolence of the uncle was not restricted to the providing with these benefices. It was necessary to place abundant means at the disposal of the nephew, in order that he might be able to live in a style becoming his position. Even the income, however, from the posts just mentioned—for the demands, already made upon young ecclesiastical princes at that time, amply balanced a great revenue piled up from accumulated posts—did not suffice for the reckless liberality, the free, large-hearted hospitality which is natural to the Pole, and at all times has distinguished his nobles, but has also at all times seriously damaged him, and that not in the domain of property alone. It was necessary to open further sources of revenue.

The archbishops of Gnesen had great possessions in the palatinate of Rava, in Masovia, specially in Lowicz and Squiernievicze, towns which belonged to them, and in which they held fortified castles.† The income derived from these extensive properties was not small. As early as the year 1517 the uncle leased out the two properties to the Bishop of Chelm, *Nicholas Koszieleczky*, and to his nephew *John*, while the latter was still in Bologna, for two

* Zeissberg, p. 676.

† For information acquired or tested on the spot respecting two of the Archbishop's seats, Lowicz—"Archiepiscopi Gnezn. sedes, cuius arx in mediis paludibus sita est"—and Squiernievicze (Skiernievicze)—"Ubi Archiep. Gnezn. palatum habet"—Dalton's own work must be consulted. The last-named locality is now famous as the meeting-place of the three emperors, September, 1884.—TR.

thousand gulden a year ; and when, in the following year, the Bishop died, the liberated portion of the property was leased to the chapter of Gnesen. Thus also provision was made for securing to the beloved nephew an income for his subsistence ; so that his career even in this respect began under the most favourable conditions.*

In after-years, when our *Johannes* walked in the light of the Gospel, and found his highest glory in being a poor but faithful servant of his poor and faithful Master, his eye was open and clear to perceive the deep injury which the Church has suffered from such distribution and accumulation of her spiritual offices. It is but a small consolation in connection with such glaring failures that in this case so much distinction in such immature years was not bestowed upon one unworthy of the office. That, however, the youthful Canon of Cracow and Plock, who, from the time of his ordination as priest in 1521, had been advanced from his position of a mere coadjutor in Gnesen to be the actual dean of the metropolitan church there, must have been approved among his companions in the spiritual office and have drawn upon himself the eyes of the chapter, is to be inferred from the fact that he took part, as representative of the metropolitan cathedral chapter at Gnesen, in the Provincial Synod at Petrikow in 1521. He did not owe to his kinship with the Archbishop alone a mission of so great honour ; the distinguished chapter aimed at being represented on such an occasion by a learned and able person. The protocols of the synod I

* Zeissberg, p. 689.

have not at hand. Of the mighty reformatory movements which had been agitating Germany for nearly four years past, not a ripple had yet reached the distant shore of this synod ; not until the following year does there resound in the assemblies an echo of that which had already penetrated into so many a baronial castle of Poland, so many a citizen's dwelling in its towns. Other questions stirred the hearts in this provincial synod too, among these that of a war contribution, in which the clergy likewise were to take part. The arduous conflicts with the German order of knights, although crowned with success for Poland hitherto, were not yet fully brought to a close ; at a convention at Bromberg (it is the Polish *Bidgostia*) on the 4th of December, 1520, the amount of contribution was fixed.* The Archbishop had complied with this injunction, and indeed as early as March had sent his nephew and dean, Johannes, with six hundred gulden to Thorn, where the King was holding his court at the time.†

But in Poland, too, that spirit was moving which in the Reformation made its procession through all lands. We have not to accompany its course through that land ; our task imposes narrower limits upon our recital. The way for the Reformation here too was prepared by many a precursor's labour, mediately, as everywhere else, by so many open and manifest disorders under which the Church and her ministers were suffering in a terrible degree ; in this

* *Tomiciana*, v. 338. On the events of the war see Voigt, *Geschichte Preussens . . . bis zum Untergang des Deutschen Ordens* (Königsberg, 1838), ix., p. 575 seq.

† *Tomiciana*, v. 366.

land, the movement was supported, too, by the pious and serious mind which animated the people and not a few of the ablest and most prominent representatives of its nobility. To many another mediate preparatory work, having its basis in the peculiar relations of that land in which the Hussite movement still continued to quiver, we have already referred in the introduction.

Nor was there wanting immediate contact. How was this to be avoided, considering the high position which Poland occupied in the council of the nations in those days, and the love of travel on the part of the nobility, who sent their sons by preference to foreign universities? At an early period Polish youths were to be found in Wittenberg also, among the hundreds of students that flocked thither out of the lands of all princes. In addition to this, we have to take into account the strong German element, which gave the tone in almost all the cities, especially of Greater Poland, and preserved a lively sympathy with all that was taking place in the old home-land. Dantsic became the advanced post of this movement in the Polish territory. As early as 1518 the Dominican monk *Jacob Knade* raised his manly voice there against the abuses of the Church; with firm courage, he frees himself from the vows of his order, and is one of the first monks to take a wife. The excitement enkindled by him communicated itself quickly to the whole town, flashed over to the other German sister-towns of Poland: Thorn, Posen, Elbing, Braunsberg; like fiery beacons blaze wherever the burning language of a bold preacher of the Gospel touches the inflammable material so abundantly present in the

towns. Already the Polish bishops observe the portentous sign of conflagration here and there, and have a foreboding of danger. One of the earliest notes of warning on their part is, I believe, the letter of the renowned Vice-Chancellor, *Peter Tomiczki*, to the Castellan of Posen and Captain-General of Greater Poland.* But yet how little does this bishop of Posen know of the true ground and reach of this movement; how little does he know of the feeling of *Lucas von Gorka* when he writes to him, "I hear that the Lutheran sect is spreading [*pullulare*] from day to day in the district of Posen, and is doing all with impunity. Your Magnificence will perceive how destructive this poison is, since such proceedings spring not from virtue, but from shamelessness; . . . such evils come about if we do not resist the beginnings." In Cracow, the Bishop alleges, the Palatine has, in association with the citizens and clergy, diligently and with great effort suppressed these excesses. He cannot understand why the forbidden books are suffered to pass with impunity from hand to hand in Posen; and people see how in the churches unbridled and blasphemous discourses are held, which presently find their ready echo in the ale-houses and social meetings.

The letter of the Vice-Chancellor was a precursor of the severe measures to which the Government roused itself in the following year, when the thunder-clouds of the Reformation gathered ever more threateningly in the land. The edict of the King, which appeared in the summer of 1523, likewise

* *Tomiciana*, vi. 87.

bears distinct indications that the counsellors of *Sigismund* did not even then understand the nature of the Reformation, and therefore urged the King to measures at the powerlessness of which for the attainment of the end in view we cannot suppress a smile. The King, certainly animated by a devout spirit, wishes to preserve his land undefiled and uninfected by the plague which rages in the neighbouring territory. He fancies he will yet succeed in doing so by means of a strict prohibition of the introducing of writings of the Reformation ; and to this end he appoints a sort of inquisitional tribunal, before which all matters relating thereto are to be brought, and to which the right is conceded of making a search in every house after such heretical books. Proceedings of unwonted severity are threatened against the possessors of such books, the disseminators of such heretical errors. A glance, however, at the result of these measures, which threatened the transgressor with death and the confiscation of all his possessions, reminds us of the truth of the proverb, that too much sharpening notches the knife.

The clergy, disturbed in their comfortable existence by the strange occurrences in the neighbouring land, approved of such measures, and credited them with the necessary force. So also the man who stood at the head of the Polish Church. We must confess that the Archbishop during a long and brilliant career in Church and State had become too much of an ecclesiastical politician for being able to acquire in the evening of his life an appreciation of the ideas of the Reformation. That which reached him with regard to it on his exalted seat appeared to him,

the ecclesiastical prince, as a revolutionary renunciation of the obedience due to the Church, and therewith, according to his firm conviction, to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ Himself. For such misdeed no punishment could appear to him too severe. Presently after the issue of the royal edict, in which we assuredly hear the voice of the mighty Primate resounding, he summoned the clergy to a synod in Leczyc (7th October, 1523), at which the notorious Bull of Leo X., "Exsurge Domine," against Luther, and the royal manifesto, were taken as the standard in accordance with which the council "rejects and condemns (*excommunicamus et anathematizamus*) every heresy which lifts up its head against the holy, orthodox, and catholic faith, and against the Roman Church, in particular the heresy which has proceeded from Luther and Hus." Yes, if such lordly decisions and anathematisings were able to quench the Spirit which proceeds from God.

Our *Johannes* was no longer present when this synod met. Not that he would have intentionally withdrawn himself from such heresy-hunting doings. We have no reason whatever for supposing that in those days he had already severed himself from the views of his uncle, or looked with other eyes than those of the main representatives of his Church upon the movement which was accomplishing itself in foreign lands. That goad had not yet been pressed into his heart against which a Saul of Tarsus found himself too weak to struggle. He was in full career ascending the ladder of ecclesiastical preferment. Hardly had he been made Dean of Gnesen, and therewith, even in his twenty-fourth year, attained to the highest post of the chapter, before the uncle was

meditating new and higher dignities for the nephew and, as he hoped, successor. On the 22nd of September, 1522, the Bishop of Plock, *Erasmus Ciolek*, one of the bitterest opponents of the Archbishop, on account of whom he had a few months before appealed in a worthily composed letter of vindication to the King, had died. Almost a year passed away without this important post being filled up ; differences had arisen between the Pope and the King of Poland with regard to the appointment. The Archbishop sought during the General Convention at Cracow in the summer days of 1523 to induce the King to select the nephew as coadjutor of the bishopric of Plock. That seemed to the King to be too much for one, of however great promise, who was still so young. While refusing to his primate this request, he agreed to use his influence with the Pope by a letter, to the end that at the next nomination the provostship of Leczyc might be bestowed upon the nephew.*

All these distinctions were not able to bind the young man to the land ; no ambition now impelled him to distinguish himself on the spot, and rapidly to climb the further steps, at a time when everything in his native land seemed to be disposed in his favour. He was strongly attracted again to foreign lands. The reason for this feeling is not clear. Certainly the life passed abroad some years before had inspired him with a longing for the refreshing intercourse of men who, themselves standing at the highest point of the humanistic movement, had kindled in him the love for those studies, the desire

* Compare thereon the spiteful account of Krzycki (*Tomiçiana*, vi. 292).

for a closer community of life with themselves. But there was also much in his own land which was beyond doubt likely to repel him, and to banish him from a society in which he was able to trace only too clearly the odious machinations of vulgar intrigue.*

If the opportunity was afforded to our *Johannes*, who in those years was living for the most part in Cracow—and how should the opportunity be wanting to him?—for obtaining an insight into the meanness of disposition in many a prominent ecclesiastic, whose doings in truth powerfully drew the Church towards a reformation, we cannot be surprised that he should wish to be removed from such surroundings, and longed for a while again, far from all hateful commotion, to breathe the pure atmosphere of humanistic studies and enjoy the society of men whom he could look upon with esteem.

* Amongst the most unscrupulous opponents of the Archbishop at this period is to be mentioned Peter Tomiczi, Bishop of Cracow and Vice-Chancellor of the kingdom, who had formerly been on terms of friendship with the Primate. Tomiczi was ably seconded in his designs by the ambitious Andreas Krzycki, then Provost of Posen, and soon after Bishop of Przemisl, to whom we shall have occasion to refer more than once.

V.

THE OTHER STUDENT TRAVELS ABROAD.

THEY were warm days, in every sense, at the time of the diet which was held in Cracow during June and July, 1523. The time of assembling had been somewhat delayed on account of the pest which, at the beginning of the year, had shown itself in Cracow. The question of the filling up of the bishopric of Plock, which was among those discussed on the sultry summer days at Cracow, could not yet be brought to a settlement ; the Primate encountered much vexatious opposition. In serried ranks the powerful adverse party was ranged against him ; even from the King indeed he could not, as was his wont, obtain the wished-for concessions. On this occasion, too, as in so many following conventions, the Lutheran heresy had appeared in the negotiations, like an awe-inspiring spectral form. The heresy, spreading ever more and more widely, began to press like a heavy nightmare upon the spirit of many, the longer the more heavily, because no good conscience supplied the needed counteractive, and ignorance as to the real ground of the movement led to fear of its destructive operation upon a domain which was unreal. Spiritual and secular councils discussed, under the presidency of the Arch-

bishop, the measures to be taken against this spreading pestilence, against which they were disposed to proceed with the same inexorable decision with which in the present day we take action against, for instance, the plague. With almost juvenile ardour did the venerable ecclesiastical prince join in the debates on this obstinate movement, conducted as these were with Polish animation, although the movement, in spite of the peremptory decisions of the previous year, still refused to be consigned to repose.*

Now the reaction from the overstrained labour had set in. The exhausted, and withal somewhat irritated, old Bishop had urgent need of recreation. Hardly had the termination of the sittings arrived, when he hastened from the close and stifling atmosphere of the town, to spend the oppressive autumn days in the shady park of his manor [at the now famous] Squiernievice. Here, in the quiet of the country, and in pleasant seclusion, was also once more taken in hand that testament the contents of which in not a few places possess the attractive value of a diary. Under the date of the 17th of August † we find the entry made, that his nephew the Dean cherishes the intention of repairing anew to Italy for the purposes of study. The nephew seems not to have been in the vicinity of the uncle, so that he was unable more fully to unfold his intention to him. Let us then attempt to do so for ourselves.

The favourite brother of our *Johannes, Jerome*, with whom he had shared a common education, had studied together in Rome and at Bologna, had, as

* *Zomiciana*, vi. 291.

† Zeissberg, p. 692.

we have said, devoted himself to the career of a statesman. A high natural endowment, which within a few years already proved him one of the ablest and most polished statesmen of the sixteenth century ; the influential position of his own family, further augmented by his marriage with the noble *Anna Koscielecka*, of the wealthy and distinguished house of the Rituani, had early opened the way for this nephew of the Polish primate to a brilliant and distinguished career. As early as 1520 he was appointed royal carver.* The very next year we meet with him as already Polish ambassador at the court of Charles V. in Brussels, in the following year in like capacity at Cologne.† Gladly did the King avail himself of the accomplished young patrician, so well versed in foreign languages, and in all respects so morally excellent, for his missions to different courts, in growing measure for the most difficult ones, such as were furnished by the very perplexed condition of European affairs in that day, wherein the voice of Poland was of such decisive weight. Such difficult commission of his king brought the skilled diplomatist to Paris and Rome in the spring of 1523, one year after he had been made captain of Inowlaclawek.‡ *Laski* was fully conscious of the difficulty of the commission entrusted to him ; the youthful statesman in both places modestly urges that he is exercised, it is true, in the use of arms, but not dexterous in the wielding of the pen.‡ In Rome it was a question of maintaining the ancient rights of the Polish crown as regards the

* On the significance of this post compare Cromer, p. 508.

† Zeissberg, p. 606 ; and Cromer, p. 517.

‡ *Tomiciana*, vi. 212.

filling up of the bishoprics before a Hadrian, who only in the previous year had succeeded *Leo X.*, and sought earnestly and uprightly to preserve intact, at a very difficult time, the rights of the Church, assailed on every side. At the court of *Francis I.* the fall of Rhodes was to be turned to account for paving the way to a peaceful co-operation of Poland and France ; and in the event of success advantage was to be taken of this approximation for privately sounding the possibility of drawing more closely the prospective bond of alliance, by means of a marriage union between the two royal families.*

Jerome appears to have returned from his embassy during the summer of the year, and to have been present at the General Convention. In the latter autumn it became necessary to follow up still farther the thread of negotiations.† This time Rome was not again touched ; the charge, however, was given to the royal messenger to repair also to the court of the Emperor. This course was taken, it may be, in order to divert, or even remove, any rising suspicion in connection with the lively intercourse between Poland and France. *Charles V.* was at that time in Spain ; thus the ambassador of the King of Poland could, without exciting much attention, either on his going or return take the great high-road through Paris to the Pyrenees. Travelling in the suite of a royal ambassador had in those days in more than one respect a seductive charm ; even the protection

* *Tomiciana*, pp. 207, 214.

† I infer the twofold journey to France within a year from the fact that in a notice pertaining to the instruction of the ambassador, Isabella, Duchess of Milan, is spoken of as dead ; her death took place only at the close of 1523.

thereby afforded in strange lands, on the insecure highways, in which so many "roaming people" wandered about aimless and without means, was not to be lightly esteemed. There was consequently no need of any long persuasion on the part of the ambassador to induce his two brothers to make the journey in his company.

I. FIRST RESIDENCE IN BASLE.

When our three Polish friends left Cracow, and by what route they set out upon their long journey, is not clear to us. We unexpectedly meet with them at a remote spot on their way.* At the end of December, 1523, or beginning of January, 1524, we find the brothers, still in the prosecution of their journey to the Emperor, staying in Basle, and there in familiar converse with *Erasmus*. The great Humanist, who was in those days in a particularly angry mood, because he had been publicly called a second Balaam, connects the origin of this very offensive appellation with the visit of these Poles. With *Jerome Erasmus* had already been acquainted in Brussels, and now they saw each other frequently. One day, as they are chatting in the library of the great scholar, the conversation turns upon the simple preacher who has now for some years kept the world in a state of excitement. The Pole is carried away, with all the ardour of his nature, against *Luther*; the impressions of the General Convention at Cracow are still fresh in his mind; he has perhaps observed that his king is surely not quite so much in earnest to proceed with the same resolution in

* In Böcking, *Ulrichi Hutteni Opera*, ii., p. 399.

the extirpation of the Lutheran heresy in his lands, as the Hotspurs of the diet. It seems to the diplomatist of importance to be able to appeal before his king to the equally unfavourable judgment of the man to whose weighty voice pope and emperor and king were wont to give heed. But on this point the timid voice of the scholar wavered greatly. Upon the table there were lying a couple of letters from the Reformer, with remarks upon Erasmus, expressed in a clear and decided tone, which had been published in Strassburg without the knowledge or consent of the writer. A private letter of the Wittenberg Reformer was, it is said, lying there too ;* and the host observes that his Polish friend would like to take the letter with him for use at home, in order to goad his king on to a more decided procedure. *Erasmus* promises him a copy of the letter, as likewise of the two which have appeared in print, and begs the ambassador to make known their contents to the Emperor also.

This incident suffices to give us an impression of the atmosphere in which our *Johannes* was still living at that time, and which was so entirely opposed to the fresh and invigorating breeze of the Reformation. *Erasmus* experienced a lively pleasure in the three Polish young men, who, though belonging to the highest nobility, bowed with friendly homage before the intellectual nobility of the Humanist.

The brothers appear to have stayed only a short time in Basle on their route, but yet long enough to have formed a few acquaintances in the highly animating humanistic circle, who were powerful

* Erasmus himself says so.

enough to detain our *Johannes*, after an absence of some months, for a longer period in the university city. We shall have an opportunity on his second visit of becoming ourselves at home in these circles. Only to one person would we refer, with whom *Laski* now came into contact, but whom he no longer found present at his return : he had then, at Basle, too, been compelled to take up again the wanderer's staff of banishment, already so often in request with him. It was *Guillaume Farel*, the fiery hero from France, who had bidden farewell to his own fair native land and gone into exile in order to be able to live in accordance with his faith. He is a phenomenon in a high degree attractive, this man, who, a fugitive from France, has for months been living in Switzerland, where the waves of the Reformation already run high, and in the first weeks of the year 1524 has found a shelter in the free city of Basle ; a countryman of *Calvin*, and his forerunner and path-breaker in Switzerland. The energetic son of the Dauphiny could not long impose silence upon himself, even in the city in which he enjoyed the rights of hospitality. As early as the twenty-third of February he persisted in holding, despite the protest of the University, a public disputation upon thirteen theses, in which the spirit of the Reformation flowed with mighty onward sweep. On this occasion *Oecolampadius* acted as interpreter.* The victorious issue of the disputation was an important step in advance for Basle towards a final decision in favour of the Reformation. For the impetuous and

* Herminjard, *Correspondance des Réformateurs* (Genève, 1866 suiv.), i., p. 193. Compare Adam, *Decades duæ (Franco-furti ad Mœnum, 1653)*, p. 13.

fearless Frenchman, however, the delay was too great before the decisive die would be cast in the peaceful development of affairs. At the end of a few months he had, by his unhesitating frankness, by his passionate insistence upon an instant decision, forfeited his right of hospitality in the city. It was thus, at any rate, too early as yet to call *Erasmus* a modern Balaam. About Whitsuntide the right of hospitality was withdrawn from the troublesome man; the homeless fugitive repaired thence to Strassburg.

Our *Johannes* had, during this first residence in Basle, been brought into personal contact with the lively, earnest-minded Frenchman, and even formed an intimacy with him. This might awaken some surprise, when we have regard to the bearing, then so fundamentally different, of the two young men towards the Church. In explanation may be urged the inner affinity of the Slavonic and the Romance nature, then already to be recognised in many traits. We must likewise take into our account the zeal of the Pole for keeping his eye open for every phenomenon of the spiritual life; and who, considering the imperfect accounts which have come down to us from that time, shall prove that one or another of the theses, even though they at first startled the nephew of the Polish ecclesiastical prince, living as he did in the midst of such totally different associations, did not pierce his heart like a lightning-flash, there to light up in lurid glare a world hitherto veiled in dense night? However this may be, the impression left was so deep, that even a quarter of a century afterwards, at a time when the Basle days often revived again fresh in his

memory, *Laski* thought also of his conversations and friendship with the stout-hearted Frenchman, and in a letter to *Calvin* sends his greeting to the indefatigable and fearless preacher of the Gospel.*

To the bitter saying of *Farel* with regard to Erasmus, when he brands him as a modern Balaam, the Polish brothers have, all unwittingly, given rise. On the occasion of their departure from Basle, *Jerome*, with Polish liberality, made to the revered Humanist, who very much liked to receive costly gifts, the present of a silver vase. The rumour was directly circulated in Basle, that *Erasmus* had boasted of being in possession of a means of quenching the Lutheran conflagration at a stroke. This means, it was whispered, he had conferred upon the Polish imperial ambassador, and the silver plate was the price of the shameful merchandise. *Erasmus* smarted greatly under this charge. In a lengthy epistle to the Constance jurisconsult *Botzemius*, to whom he pours forth his troubled heart, he hints only obscurely at the man whom he takes to be the author of the reproach; he must afterwards have obtained more certain information that the thing had been said in somewhat brusque candour by *William Farel*; and then he rested not until he had got the opponent driven out of Basle.†

But that took place long after the *Laskis* had left the city. We are without any information as to the time of their departure; nay, we are to so great an extent groping in the dark as regards the succession of time that it is only by a conclusion on the

* *Calvini Opera* (in the *Corpus Reformatorum*) (*Brunsvigæ, 1863 seq.*), xiv. 42.

† Compare Haag, *La France Protestante* (Paris, 1850), v. 61.

grounds of probability that we are led to place at this stage, shortly after his brief residence in Basle, the journey of our *Johannes* to Paris, where, at any rate, he most assuredly was. More fortunate explorers will perhaps hereafter light upon a more certain date ; until then conjecture may be allowed its modest place.

2. IN PARIS.

If our conjecture be correct, it was about the spring of 1524 that our three Poles entered the metropolis of France, not as distinguished strangers who must first open to themselves a way into the higher society. *Jerome* had already repeatedly visited the court of the King, and, moreover, the last time in particular on a mission which of necessity brought the plenipotentiary into familiar relations with the King himself. *Francis I.*, for whom much depended on an intimate alliance with Poland, was on a very friendly footing with the gifted ambassador, the more so because he was drawn to the chivalrous person of the ambassador himself. The youngest brother had either already, on a previous occasion as formerly mentioned, won the favour of the King, or he acquired it now, and that in such high degree that he entered the service of the King of France, and in his immediate surroundings often afterwards gave proofs of his most faithful attachment to *Francis I.*, even in the darkest days of his adversity. It is thus self-evident that our *Johannes* could go in and out at the French court at his pleasure.

It was for an aspiring theologian an attractive

time at which *Laski* abode in Paris. The powerful movement, which had proceeded from Germany a few years before, had not made a halt at the Rhine; its wide circles quickly touched the other bank also, and already one might trace the effect in the heart of France, nay in the very court of the King. Those who, as the spiritual sons and heirs of the movement, now dwell in that land, suppose that the first traces of the newly awakened Reformation life must be sought in France itself. Our Polish dean must have been singularly affected at seeing the same ineffectual measures now adopted by the Sorbonne against the heretical doctrine to which he had himself given his assent but the year before. Precisely the interdiction of the writings of the Reformation was then, as to-day, a right trustworthy lever for their diffusion. But then on the Seine men were sooner disposed than on the Vistula to follow up passionate words with stern deeds; they shrank not from raising an avenging hand against those who incurred the not unfounded suspicion of having given a questionable reception to the new and dangerous doctrine.

The men well-disposed towards the Gospel gathered around the venerable form of the Bishop of Meaux, *Briçonnet*, the spiritual adviser of the sister of the King, *Marguerite of Valois*. Specially during the first years of his episcopal administration is there to be perceived in the action of the pious shepherd of souls a compassion for the flock entrusted to him, a profound grieving over the open and gaping wounds of his Church. It seems like a breeze of spring in the Gallican Church when we see how this pastor proclaims to his flock the Word

of God in a preaching of almost Protestant tone ; how his clergy, animated by a like zeal of love, unceasingly pass to and fro between Meaux and Paris, to attend in faithful ministration upon their spiritual charge ; how from this evangelically minded circle writings go forth over all the land, which, though expressed in cautious and scrupulous language, and wanting the jubilant tone of freedom breathing in the burning words of the German Reformer, nevertheless re-echoed far and wide in the lark-song of early morning, which even in its earnest cadences breathed a longing for the dawn of the new day.

In the circle of these men we meet with one of the most attractive forms to be found among the precursors of the Reformation. It is the then highly venerable *Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples*, who, proceeding from the studies of the ancient literature, was among the first courageously to apply himself to the investigation of Holy Scripture, at first, it is true, only with the interest in those days passionately devoted to every literary fragment of antiquity. But just this prosaic mode of contemplation, which aimed only at the right understanding of the words, was the means of striking off the fetters in which it had been sought for ages past to place the Word of God, to the intent that it should be made to give its assent only to all possible dogmas and definitions of the Church. In the course, however, of a further unceasing penetration into the meaning, the sacred contents of the book exerted their inevitable effect upon the devout man. So soon as he had felt this saving effect in his own experience he rested not until he had submitted the great throng of his students at the Paris University to the same in-

fluence. His unfolding of single books of the New Testament is a veritable pioneer labour.* During these very days (1522—1523) his expositions on the four Gospels had appeared in the press, and in rapid succession the Catholic Epistles, creating the greatest sensation, and for the Sorbonne no small degree of offence. These books now fell into the hands of our Polish friend. The name of the author had been familiar to him from his boyhood. The school editions and elucidations of *Faber Stapulensis* on the Latin and Greek classics had almost all been reprinted in Cracow, and the numerous editions give us an idea of the frequent use of them in Laski's native land. In those Paris days Laski seems to have been brought likewise into close personal relations with the serious and devout investigator of Scripture. In the only passage of his works, so far as my memory serves me, in which he makes mention of the French expositor, he lauds certain qualities in the man which may well have become known to him from personal intercourse.† Faber was up to that time still firmly persuaded that he could yet claim room and toleration in his mother Church for his opinions, which, it is true, were already most fiercely assailed by the opponents. The painful moment of decision had not yet come for the old man. Timidly did he shrink from the dreaded hour. But while upon his deathbed, in 1536, the veteran of eighty-six years was tortured with the thought that he had been weak in the hour of peril, and had

* Compare Graf, "Jacobus Faber Stapulensis," *Ztsch. f. Hist. Theol.* (1852), p. 24 seq.

† Kuyper, *Joannis a Lasco opera tam edita quam inedita*, 2 vols. (Anstel., 1866), i., p. 53.

lacked the witnessing courage of a confessor, and that he had thus forfeited the crown of life which his heroic disciples and friends, the noble *Pauvret* and the intrepid confessor *Berquin*, had obtained by their faithfulness unto death at the stake.

Out of the midst of these men, profoundly inspired as they were with the evangelic spirit, and of kindred sentiments and endeavours with them, towers in graceful beauty the form of the renowned *Marguerite de Valois*. She belongs to the most chosen number of the daughters of her native land, and in like degree to the most favourite daughters of the Renaissance, at the point at which it inclined to the side of the Reformation. The current of thought in those great days beats upon her well-nigh masculine soul, there to meet with a warm and deep and delicate receptiveness. With full understanding and enjoyment, the highly gifted and noble princess reads the Latin, Italian, and Spanish authors ; nor is she unacquainted with Greek and Hebrew. The same passionate acquisitiveness for learning, which unceasingly animates the Humanists of those days, has descended likewise upon her. But with a certain feminine refinement of feeling, she avoids such disquieting research ; her devout mind leads her in the advancing path of her severe studies into the depths of the word of God. She is brought into contact with the "friends of God" in Meaux. *Briçonnet* is to her more than a father-confessor ; in the fair, evangelical sense of the word, her spiritual shepherd. Before him she pours out her heart, athirst for grace, and that in affecting letters, preserved to the present day, precious testimonies of her pious soul, as also of the age in which she lived. She is to be regarded

as the guardian angel of the reformatioinal movement in France: to help it, however, to a full deliverance surpassed her powers; for such a lofty, severe task she was still too much *ma mignonne*, as the King was wont most frequently to designate his dearly loved sister. Every moment men were looking to see her take the decisive step of openly confessing herself on the side of the Reformation. She had appeared so markedly in the foreground, had given so momentous an impetus thereto, and that in so decided a manner, that others reverentially awaited the signal to be given by her, and on that account even irresolutely lingered. But she, too, lingers; at the last moment she shrinks back, not, it is true, from fear of the suffering she might have to encounter; of this she bore with resignation an overflowing measure. But she is just the *mignonne* of her brother, and the King almost her idol. To awaken his displeasure, perhaps to have to separate from him on account of such a step,—the thought of such a possibility rises not for a moment before her passionately loving soul. She would be able to sing the last strophes of our German Reformation Hymn, save in the case that, in place of the possessions there demanded, the parting with her brother had been the sacrifice required of her. Sorrowfully, as the rich young man in the Gospel, would she then have gone away from the Lord, who demands so heavy a sacrifice at her hands. If one might be allowed to give another turn to the course of history by what prove to be, in presence of its brazen step, but very fond wishes, our wish would here certainly be that this towering form at the threshold of the French Reformation had only received, in place of the

counsel of *Briçonnet*, consoling himself in a certain mysticism, that of her most distinguished contemporary and countryman, the great *Calvin*, and had permitted the sacred truth by him to be carried home to the conscience, that the confession of Christ is worthy of the sacrifice of even the most faithful brother's love ! But history has followed a different path for that beauteous land. France has violently repelled the Reformation from its richly favoured plains, and in consequence thereof has had to undergo the Revolution, whose bloody and baleful convulsions to this hour forbid the much-enduring land to attain to repose.

This train of thought has led us far from our starting point. We hasten to return to that far-off year of the visit of *Laski* to the court of the King. *Francis I.* cherished great esteem for his highly gifted sister, and heeded her wise counsel. It was a frequent occurrence that after holding an interview with the foreign ambassadors, he would refer them likewise to his sister, would consult with her as to a final decision, and would follow her guidance therein.*

On account in particular of his secret commission would the ambassador of King Sigismund be introduced by *Francis I.* to his sister ; through him our *Johannes* also obtained access to the court. That he was brought into immediate personal converse with the high-minded *Marguerite de Valois* in those days is attested by the epistle of *Erasmus* to the princess, in which he makes mention of the

* Merle d'Aubigné, *Histoire de la Réformation du XVI^e Siècle* (Paris, 1860), iii., p. 383.

letters she had addressed to *A Lasco* during his residence in Basle.* Many traces of elective affinity are to be discerned in the spiritual tendency of the two persons, *Laski* then still firmly rooted in his attachment to the Romish Church, *Marguerite* continuing in it until the end of life, both alike animated by the conviction that the deep wounds recognised by them could still be healed by the Church herself. She, in point of years the senior, is also intellectually in advance of the man who is on the way to the Reformation ; eventually, however, the French queen is outstripped by the Pole, who alone of the two attained to the fair prize, because he was prepared for making a sacrifice from which the gifted woman shrank.

How long our *Laski* still remained in Paris after his brother had departed for the execution of the royal commission entrusted to him, we have been unable to discover, and just as little whether he repaired thence to Switzerland direct, or whether his course of studies led him to other places also. We meet with him only in Basle at the end of 1524, and breathe freely again, as it were, on having found him there, because from this time we have more solid ground under our feet ; and certainly a clearer light falls upon this second visit than the twilight in which hitherto for the most part we have had to trace our steps.

3. THE SECOND RESIDENCE IN BASLE.

The fortunate Basle, even in the sixteenth century,

* Erasmus, *Epistolarum Libri XXXI.* (Londini, 1642), p. 970.

and specially in those days, in its fairest, most abundantly favoured time of bloom ! Situate on the boundary line of two lands, or rather standing with firm foot in both lands on either side of the Rhine, the city has known, at that time of decision in which she cast in her lot with Switzerland, how to preserve to herself the rights of citizenship in the intellectual fatherland of the two neighbouring States. The citizens remained in their essential character men of the German mind, and adopted in addition the Switzer's proud sense of freedom ; this twofold gift has at all times preserved a good name. *Aeneas Sylvius* in his day gives a flattering description of the city and its inhabitants, at the time when he abode within its bright and cheerful walls during the sitting of the Council of Basle (1431). The sound vigorous sense, which is lauded by him, did not fail the inhabitants during the century which had elapsed ; there had grown up, however, a greater earnestness, a scientific eagerness, an active interest in the questions which now stirred the minds of men. Basle had become a main fortress of Humanism on this side the Alps, a sanctuary and rendezvous of the learned, who here could quietly surrender themselves to their passion for studies. Of the touching zeal, the almost consuming, devouring ardour of the affection which inspired the Humanists for the revived sciences, Basle affords us more than one fascinating instance. What a rare apparition, for example, that *Thomas Platter*, whose traits have been caught by the master-hand of a Freytag in the picture of a roving scholar of the sixteenth century !* We

* Freytag, *Bilder aus der Deutschen Vergangenheit*

cannot refrain from here mentioning an incident not turned to account by others. The poor shepherd boy, and then roving scholar, who, without fixed abode, had travelled so far into Germany, has now landed at the rope-maker's workshop in Basle, after long and toilsome wanderings. To the cord which he has to twist upon the rope-walk he affixes a wooden fork, holding a single sheet of a copy of Plautus which has been given him. Thus walking backwards, he twists the rope and plunges in spirit into the midst of the breathing forms of the Roman poet. In this way he plied the Latin, in this way the Greek, yea even the Hebrew, and while yet a journeyman rope-maker also taught in the school of Dr. *Oporinus*. And now he relates in his diary, "In the same year,"—it was about the time at which *Laski* was living in Basle,—"there came a Frenchman from the Queen of Navarre, sent out to learn Hebrew, who came also into the school, where, as I went in my common clothes, I sat me down behind the stove, which was a fine seat, and let the students sit at the table. So says the Frenchman, 'Quando venit noster professor ?'" ["When does our professor come ?"] "Oporinus points to me. Then he looks upon me and begins to wonder, thinks in doubt, 'Such a man ought to be clad in other garments than such common ones.' When all was over, he took me by the hand, leads me out over the little bridge, and asks me how it came about that I was so poorly clad. Said I, 'Mea res ad restim rediit'" ["My affairs have come to the rope" (a Terentian joke)]. "Then said he, 'If I would, he was

(Leipsic, 1867), ii. 2, p. 13 seq. Compare *Thomas u. Felix Platter, Zwei Lebensbilder*, by Heumann (Gütersloh, 1882).

minded to write to the Queen about me ; she would raise me to a god if I would only follow him ; but I would not follow him . . .”*

Rather then in Basle as a journeyman rope-maker, than be entertained in Paris as a king. It is the proud answer of the free Humanist, who has found in this place what he wants. Not a little did it contribute to the fame of this city that it had become the workplace of important master-printers, above all the renowned *Froben*, and then also people like *Amerbach*, *Oporinus*, and so many others. The printing art was not yet old, and those engaged in its service passed through the ever-memorable period of first love for the new wonder-inspiring art.

Those who practised the marvellous discovery looked upon themselves as artists, not as handicraftsmen ; they were enthusiastic heralds in the service of the *humaniora*, not a few among them the greatest favourers of science, their workshop a fount of learning. The profit from their calling was for these men a secondary question ; their enthusiasm was derived from the satisfying feeling of being an essential link in the chain at which the greatest minds were standing day and night, in order to raise the new-found treasure. They had the sense of being royal mint-masters, who gave currency to the gold obtained, as the common possession of the learned ; upon all their doings in those days rests the fine enamel of an intellectual act, which carries its reward in itself.

The master-printer *Froben* was the powerful magnet which in those years drew to Basle an

* Boos, *Thomas und Felix Platter* (Leipsic, 1878), p. 55.

Erasmus, the friend and invited guest of kings and the highest spiritual and secular dignitaries, which was strong enough also to detain him in the quiet burgher city even when *Margaret of Austria*, spite of the imperial mandate, made the payment of the pension granted him dependent upon the return of this king of science to the court of Brabant.*

Erasmus, at the time when he migrated to Basle, was looked upon as the king in the domain of knowledge and of the study of ancient literature. In this delicate form, with the sharply projecting, pointed nose, with the fine firmly closed lips, about which plays a slight suppressed smile, as the pencil of *Holbein* has depicted the man to us as the archetype of an intellectual scholar, was collected, as it were in a focus, all that gave shape and life to the humanistic movement. That which once in after-times *Zinzendorf* confessed of himself in a very different province—he had “only one passion, and that was Christ,” the word of a passion consuming all other emotions of the soul,—is true also of *Erasmus*, only with regard to that other object, the newly awakened science. Of an acute mind, a refined intellect, freed from the trammels of earlier times, *Erasmus* launched forth into the province now first opening itself to human research; with greater ardour has no youth ever clasped to his heart his bride, than that with which he impressed the kiss of his love and enthusiasm upon the newly awakened, reviving world of the ancients. It is a gigantic industry, which the man with the

* Feugère, *Erasme. Etude sur sa Vie et ses Ouvrages* (Paris, 1874), p. 113.

sickly physical frame unfolded his life long. Into all the most remote corners his searching eye^{is} found to penetrate; nothing remains strange to him; everywhere he is at once at home in the newly discovered domain. The genius of the ancients is not ungrateful in return for such faithful devotion; it opens up to the unwearied woer its beauty, so that it is as though the ancients themselves were speaking through him, so pure, so clear, so well proportioned and sparkling flows forth his Latin discourse.

Even as a Humanist *Erasmus* bears the stamp of the German character. The latter is more earnest, profound, more immediately penetrating to the sources of life, than the other nature, beyond the mountains, in the sunny, joyous south. For a *Boccacio*, or even an *Aretino*, we have no congenial spot. The direct effect of the revival of the sciences may be compared, in all lands through which it held its procession, to the exultant jubilation of a crowd of boys, who, long pent up in the close schoolroom, with its dust and vapour, are now suddenly set free, and rush out amidst the breezes of spring, to drink in deep draughts the delicious air of May. Just as great was the difference between the breath of fresh air which was wafted to the Humanists from the study of the newly revived Greeks and Romans as compared with the oppressive atmosphere which had gradually formed about the investigations of scholasticism. We must not pronounce too severe a judgment on the outbreak of the first, perhaps wild jubilation at the reopened place of exercise; and must not apply too stern a rule to the period of the first boisterous

excitement. But life is not to be passed on this playground, and its task is not the enjoyment of pleasure.

It was in Germany that the studies of Humanism underwent a timely diversion into more serious channels, and amongst those who took the lead in this direction we find *Erasmus*. In the course of his investigations, which, with bold spring, left far behind them the beaten tracks of scholasticism, he plunged into the writings of the Church Fathers ; astonishing is the number of the editions of the old witnesses for the faith which he brought out. *Froben* had hardly printing-presses enough to keep pace with his bee-like industry. The Humanist did not restrict his unresting step to the Fathers alone ; he penetrated even to the fountain-head. His edition of the New Testament appeared in 1516. It was a hurried labour ; *Erasmus* himself admitted this. But that the edition *did* appear was in those days a great fact. It was the victorious return to the word of God, the freeing of the path from all the unspeakable brushwood of human dogma which had blocked up the access to the fountain itself. The New Testament was looked upon now as afresh brought to light, like a newly discovered writing of Cicero or Plato ; and was also so read by many. This was, in the first place, a gain for the understanding of it ; all the unhappy allegorisings of scholasticism vanished before the sober grammatical treatment of the Scripture text, as the misty forms vanish before the piercing

* Berger, *La Bible au XVI^e Siècle* (Paris, 1879), p. 55, makes mention of the passage in the letter of Erasmus to Pirkheimer : "Novum testamentum præcipitatum fuit verius quam editum."

ray of the sun. This liberating effect of the studies of Humanism in their furthering influence upon the Reformation may be compared to the significance of the campaigns of Alexander upon the first diffusion of Christianity. *Ximenez* had begun the preparatory labours for his polyglot of the New Testament much earlier, and everybody was intently looking for its appearing. *Erasmus* had been led to undertake the hurried labour by the wish to be beforehand with the Spaniard. The German Humanist, however, did not content himself with an edition of the text; with devout mind he kept his eye fixed upon the higher task of opening up to his contemporaries the understanding of Holy Scripture. Precious directions thereto, of value to the present hour, are to be gathered from the writings of *Erasmus* bearing on this subject, communicated by a soul deeply affected by the sacred contents of the writings, which surrenders itself to the impression of the Word of God, though still in a certain *naïve* manner without calculating the full bearing of this impression. A breath of the Reformation sweeps through these passages; no one can deny it. In them moves a spirit which is out of harmony with the modest or even scrupulous self-restriction, which *Erasmus*, in a figure, designates as the life-task assigned to him. On one occasion he compares his position to that of the pillars of Mercury in ancient Rome, which, set up at the cross-roads, point out the way to the traveller, without entering upon it themselves. The Humanist *did* enter upon it, but, alas! shrank timidly back when he observed that which he might have to encounter upon this path.

Those who at that time set out fearlessly in this

path have often bitterly condemned the conduct of those who remained behind. More lenient, but at the same time more just, is our judgment after an interval of more than three hundred years. We have to judge the great Humanist not only by the standard of those who pressed forward from Humanism to the Reformation ; we have to measure him also by that wherein the endeavours of the German Humanist are so essentially and so advantageously distinguished from the endeavours of those beyond the Alps. Even before the decided rupture had been made between the German Reformer and the German Humanist, *Luther* expressed the opinion—already with the presentiment of the approaching separation, but as yet under the spell of esteem for the powerful man—that *Erasmus*, like another Moses, had brought up his people out of Egypt, but had not led them into the land of promise. *Erasmus* has never been anxious about the salvation of his soul, as the Augustin monk at Erfurt. He offers in his whole appearance the brilliant and incontestable proof of that which purely humanistic efforts are capable of yielding : how under their quickening breath a fair world arises, for a while irradiated by the full and pure charm of art, but also how its light is ever unable to disperse the mists of sin, to reconcile us to God, to effect our sanctification. God, however, has not appointed us the task of enjoying a fair life, but of becoming holy as He is holy. Humanism is able perhaps for a moment to silence the earnest voice of the conscience amidst its liquid melodies ; but never is it qualified to afford a consolatory answer, a blessed satisfaction, to this voice, which cries after God as the hart cries after

the water-brooks. This its powerlessness is deeply impressed upon its creations, even in the case of *Erasmus*, who, full of painful timidity, cautiously dives, as it were, out of the way of the truth of the Reformation. When the clear waters then roll over him, and somewhat distort his features, it seems to us often as though we see in the man already something of that which is borne on the forehead of the *Bayles*, the Encyclopædists, and a faint hint also of that which is borne by a *Voltaire*: that sarcastic vein which rejoices to awaken doubt, and yet cautiously remains in hiding, not to disclose its ultimate design; that mode which *Sainte-Beuve* once characterised as simultaneous attack and defence, which goes its way under the mask of learning.*

Erasmus, at the time when *Laski* came to Basle, was standing at the decisive parting of the ways for or against the Reformation, which had already become strong enough in Germany and Switzerland to wring from the presiding spirit among the Humanists the painful decision. We know that he cast his die otherwise than *Ulric von Hutten*, from whom he became so remarkably estranged in those years. The Humanist, who by the public renunciation of the Reformation, as likewise by the cessation of a sound development of life, maintains his course, does not find the path open to him for his return to the sheltering bosom of the Romish Church. Both currents cast upon

* Feugère (p. 236): "Cette méthode"—selon Ste.-Beuve—"d'attaque et de sape, qui va son train sous air d'érudition, et que Jansénius définissait si bien en disant, qu'elle consistait à produire les difficultés contre la foi sous forme de questions, et à insérer ce qui était soulevé là-dessus."

him the burning sand of the shore, on which he pines in solitude ; it is difficult to decide whether the darts hurled from Wittenberg, or those from the Sorbonne in Paris and from the University in Louvain, were the more galling for the lonely and wounded man.

We have, in sketching the central person, who occupies, at that mighty turning point, so prominent a post that his fate acquires a typical significance, already to some extent anticipated the time at which our *Laski* stood on terms of intimacy with him. The sketch has perhaps been made too broadly and on too large a scale for our framework ; we were carried away by the attraction of the theme, because the influence of that extraordinary man is to be traced upon the course of our hero's life during a whole decade. The eventual decision in his position towards the Reformation was considerably delayed by the powerful personality of the revered master. Erasmus appeared for a long time to the timid Churchman to afford eloquent proof that one may surrender himself, wholly and enthusiastically, to the fresh warm current of the studies of Humanism, without becoming unfaithful to the mother Church.

We have already seen that *Laski* did not form the acquaintance of the illustrious man merely on his second residence in Basle ; the elder brother had already introduced him to the acknowledged head of the sciences ; the commendatory recognition of the young Pole in the previous year conferred upon him the right now to beg a second time for admission to the society of the master. The favourable impression was augmented from time to time,

and that reciprocally. To the old magnate, who at this particular time was so severely assailed on all sides—we have only to remind our readers that the blows received in the feud with Hutten still left their scars, and now he had again to buckle on the armour to meet the German Reformer and his challenges,—to the old sorely harassed magnate it might well do good to receive the testimony of such warm and devoted loyalty on the part of this refined and amiable Pole, who at home belonged to the highest circles, and here stood in bashful reverence before the great scholar. The man at one time lauded as a king by all the world was only too accessible to delicate marks of homage and tokens of veneration. The wave of general favour was seriously receding ; it looks as though the man, long unaccustomed to receive these tokens, clung to those still given, and was at pains to salute from afar the tribute which his immediate surroundings threatened to refuse him.

Erasmus was wont to receive boarders into his society of young men. He had sufficient space at his disposal in his quarters, at the house of his printer *Froben*, to vacate a room for a young scholar. Since he did this in order to augment his income, only young men of wealth could share the privilege of becoming part of the household of the famous scholar. Our liberal Pole, already in his youthful years in the possession of no inconsiderable benefices, and, after the manner of his nation, entirely careless as regards money matters, probably paid dearly enough for the favour which he enjoyed during the last half of his stay in Basle. Three and a half gulden per month was the price of

the room,* and he seems to have defrayed the whole expenses of the kitchen out of his income; so that *Erasmus* was a guest in his own house, and long painfully missed the generous guest after the latter had been called to leave Basle. In a magnanimous spirit, *Laski* further purchased of his book-collecting host his entire library, with the friendly concession of leaving the scholar to the end of his life in the enjoyment of the slowly accumulated treasures. *Laski* was not then in a position to pay down the full purchase money; there remained a sum of two hundred gulden still lying on it, and *Erasmus* observed in his will† that the books were to be delivered up at his death only on condition that the outstanding amount should have been paid to his heirs. The payment seems not to have been made; at the time of *Erasmus'* death *Laski* was almost fortuneless, and was on the point of quitting the Romish Church.

It was not these external advantages which attached *Erasmus* to his new household companion. The old man felt the power of a captivating influence exerted by the youthful form. *Erasmus* in his letters is not sparing of words, specially where there is a prospect of that which he has written coming under the eye of the person commended. But when we review the different passages in his letters concerning the young friends, they certainly leave the impression that the words are not merely the light coin of social intercourse. It seems as

* Compare the very rare little volume of the private letters of *Erasmus* to *Amerbach* (Bas., MDCCLXXIX.), which fell into my hands in the town library at Basle.

† In the private letters of *Amerbach*, just referred to, there is a printed copy of the will (p. 122).

though the morally earnest personality of *Laski* had itself gained an ascendancy over the old man, and had exerted an abiding influence. That which is lauded by *Erasmus* presents the same lineaments, only now further detailed, as were already pointed out to us by the tutor at Bologna, the same lineaments as we ourselves again recognise, more set in the matured life of the man, but which are now of special value as derived from one who lived in intimate association with him during successive months. It manifests an almost youthful warmth, a touching and affectionate longing, when the man of sixty and more years judges in words like these of his daily companion : "While a man of no ordinary learning, *Laski* is in his life spotlessly pure, as fresh-fallen snow ; kindly, amiable, so that everybody begins to live again in his society and all have a sense of bereavement at his departure ; a golden disposition, a true pearl, and so unassuming and free from arrogance, although he is called some day to fill one of the highest offices in his native land." The young Pole, with his ancient Roman blamelessness of character (*prisua integritas*), serves *Erasmus* as a proof,—as he expresses himself in a dedication to the Vayvode of Cracow—"that Astraea, in taking her flight from the earth, had left the last traces of her sojourn among the people of Poland." Often does the renowned man admit, even after a lapse of years, that he became the better for his living with *Laski*; that he, the old man, has learnt from that young man that which, in other cases, youth has to learn from age,—sobriety, temperance, reverence, moderation of the tongue, modesty, chastity, purity of character.

Laski clung with great deference to the master whose disciple he boasted to be in those days. He was willingly led on by him in his humanistic studies, then pursued with so great ardour ; but the deeper and more abundant knowledge acquired by him in *this* domain was not in after-years the most grateful memory. Yet higher is his boast of the man, that he first guided his soul to spiritual things ; that he had under that guidance first begun to feel himself at home in the province of true religion.* Strange, and yet in those days not surprising confession, as coming from the Romish Church. The young man, already high on the ladder of ecclesiastical dignities in early years, who in former days had long devoted himself to theological studies in Bologna, now first learns in Basle, and at the feet of the German Humanist, the primary and wholly decisive rudiments of his vocation ! And it is *Erasmus* again who gives the impulse to a movement which with necessity impels into paths which the master himself did not venture to enter on. So leniently and beautifully does *Laski* in after-years judge of this weakness and half-heartedness of the Humanist, with which he had already become sufficiently acquainted during his residence in Basle. "Every one has his measure of gifts, and no single one is strong in all domains ; for us also there is still much to-day which we do not know. It is our part to congratulate ourselves on that which God, in accordance with the decree of His will, has been pleased to vouchsafe to us according to the measure

* Kuyper, ii. 569 : "Erasmus mihi autor fuit, ut animum ad sacra adjicerem, imo vero ille primus me in vera religione instituere coepit."

of our faith. On that account also we must rejoice in the gifts of Erasmus, which were of a truth great and significant enough, and ought to acknowledge God in them. But if we believe we have advanced farther, let us consider that this too was only granted to us of God."* Yes, that is the temperate language, on account of which the youth already served as an example to the old man.

Erasmus' writings and his oral teaching in personal converse were well adapted for introducing a devout mind to the glory of the spiritual vocation, by leading far away from artificially constructed, leaking cisterns of scholastic lore, beyond the Fathers of the Church, to the living fountain of the Word of God itself. How should a writing like the *Manual of Instruction for attaining to a True Theology*, published as early as 1515, fail of exerting its influence upon *Laski*?† And what precious, what stimulating, and refreshing passages, in Erasmus' paraphrases and explanations of single parts of Holy Writ! Yet even in these courses of exegetical investigation it is not difficult to discern the timid step of the man who advances only to the threshold of the sanctuary, then halts, and contents himself with merely external things. Those were the heroes of the Reformation who courageously brooked not to remain standing outside, and then in the sanctuary have seen Jesus only.

With one of these heroes *Laski* was brought into personal contact during his Basle days, true, only in a passing moment, but yet quite sufficiently for him to receive that goad of God pressed into his soul

* Kuyper, ii. 584.

† Compare the elaborate description in Feugère, p. 205 f.

against which no man, even though he were a Saul of Tarsus, can successfully strive. In his apologetic writing against *Westphal* he makes mention, in two passages,* of the influence which *Zwingli* has exerted upon him. In passing through on his way to France he had met with *Zwingli* in Zurich,† and was first induced by him to enter upon the study of the Holy Scriptures ; to him he owed his most powerful stimulus. He nevertheless defends himself resolutely against the assertion of *Westphal* that he is a *Zwinglian*, since he was baptised into the name of no man, and neither *Luther* nor *Zwingli* was crucified for him, nor does he accept the doctrine of *Zwingli* in all its particulars. Every attempt to obtain more precise information concerning this meeting with *Zwingli* in Zurich has proved a failure. Neither do the letters of the Reformer contain any allusion to it, nor could any hint with regard thereto be found in the abundant epistolary correspondence of those who at that time held communication with *Zwingli*. The hospitable dwelling of the noble *Zuricher* was open to all ; not lightly did any person of distinction let slip the opportunity of enjoying an interview with the daring man. But of our *Laski* report says nothing ; so that we must rest content with his own explicit statement.

In imperishable remembrance remain for *Laski* these Basle days, which he spent in spiritual inter-

* Kuyper, i. 282, 338.

† Has not *Laski* in this case, after an interval of thirty-four years, fallen into an error of memory ? It can hardly have been on his way to France, whither he travelled in the company of his brother, but must rather have been during his residence in Basle.

course with the leading men. Through the agency of his host, it was only to be expected that he should be brought into contact with the household which had been for *Erasmus* the reason of his staying in Basle. Among those who frequented the society of Froben he attached himself in particular to *Bonifacius Amerbach*, who in 1524 had become professor of civil law in Basle. When we contemplate the fine picture of the young jurisconsult, painted by the hand of his friend *Holbein*, it is as though we were looking upon our *Johannes* in the days of his youth. And in truth, if we had to name among the acquaintances of our friend in Basle a personality having elective affinity for that of our *Laski*, we should have at once to point to this professor, of about the same age with *Laski*, as the one who presents the most similar mental traits. The passages in the letters of the renowned painter concerning this his dearest friend read as though they were referring to *Laski* himself.* In them the purity of his character, his integrity, his conscientiousness, fidelity to duty, severity of morals, are boasted of. Then again *Holbein* dwells on the charming gifts of social converse, his vivacity, the exuberant wit in conversation, a fine poetic and musical vein. People loved to listen to the Professor as he played upon the lute one of the ditties composed by himself, perhaps to the then favourite air "Adieu, mes amors." In such leisure hours of social fellowship, no doubt our *Laski* too, acquainted as he was with music from his university days, was wont to take his guitar in hand, to render to his

* Woltmann, *Holbein und seine Zeit* (Leipsic, 1866), i., p. 262.

friends the songs of his Polish home. A happy fortune has preserved to us a number of letters of *Laski* to his friend *Amerbach*.* Some of them consist only of a few lines upon a strip of paper; but even the passing, everyday character of the contents affords us a charming glimpse into the easy familiarity of the friendly intercourse. The light-hearted Pole borrows of his well-to-do friend smaller or larger sums of money when the store in hand has been exhausted, and the messenger has not yet returned whom he has sent to Augsburg to draw money upon his banker there, the well-known *Fugger*. Long after the departure from Basle a lively interchange of letters is kept up on the part of the two friends.

It was an exceedingly stimulating intellectual intercourse which prevailed in Basle in those days, and into the full current of which the guest and companion of *Erasmus* entered. The humanistic and reformatory movement here still advanced peacefully side by side, though, it is true, in the last steps of such amicable walk. The heads, who on the morrow were compelled to present a hostile front, conversed with each other to-day, sometimes with a *naïveté* which appears astonishing to us at the present time. In social converse, you might hear from the lips of *Erasmus* utterances, for instance, on the subject of the Lord's Supper, which assign to him a position further to the left than that taken even by *Zwingli*. The oppositions and distinctions were not yet defined, had not as yet been clearly brought out and reduced to shape. Thus one saw grouped around

* They are to be found, still unpublished and hitherto unused, in the archives of the Antisterium in Basle.

the old master, in lively conversation with him, here men like *Oecolampadius* and *Pellican*, there men like *Glarean* and *Beatus Rhenanus*; and our *Laski* received and enjoyed the blessing of this twofold intercourse. A glance only at two or three of these men, whose influence did not pass away without leaving a trace upon the vigorous and receptive inner life of our friend.*

With *Oecolampadius* indeed *Laski* had been brought into contact during his first brief sojourn in Basle, probably by the agency of *Farel*, who had been the table-companion of the after-Reformer of Basle.† *Laski* retained an honouring memory of this eminent man. At the close of two decades, his judgment with regard to him is still such that he thinks of him with the highest respect, on account of his rare simplicity and piety, combined with so great learning.‡ The works of the master adorn his collection of books; he wishes to possess all that *Oecolampadius* has written. A detailed comparison would show how faithful and zealous a reader of his works, specially of his exposition of the Holy Scriptures, *Laski* has been. In the far-off home they may well have become friendly, solitary guides to the Romish priest, to lead him more and more deeply into the understanding of the Scriptures, and with this, as a logical and necessary consequence, gradually

* The first edition of Wyclif's *Trialogus* was issued in this year 1525, according to Hardwick from the Basle press. If this be so, A Lasco could hardly fail to have heard its contents discussed.—TR.

† Herminjard (i. 299) fixes by conjecture upon Peter Tous-sain as the recorder of the table-talk mentioned by this author. May it not, however, have been our Laski, the *vir integritatis rarissimæ*?

‡ Kuyper, ii. 576.

but surely to free him from the spell of the Romish tradition and error.

When often in later years the Basle days stood in attractive beauty before the spirit's eye of *Laski*, it was the form of *Conrad Pellican* in particular which in memory heartily saluted him. As yet, in the garb of a superior of the Minorite order, and with faithful touching attachment to the quiet contemplative cloister life, the honest simple scholar nevertheless already heard in those days such ringing herald calls for the Reformation sounding forth over the land. A fair, heartily genial, and withal decided and upright form in the circle of those towering men of Basle, is that of *Pellican*, who, animated by the most affecting zeal for the studies of humanity, ever enters more warmly, more consciously upon the path of the Reformation.* *Laski* felt himself in a high degree attracted by the man, to whom similarly attuned chords of the soul attached him. After an interruption of twenty years, he renews the old relations in a letter to the tutor and companion in studies, through which there runs so heartfelt a note of

* What a delicious counterpart to that eagerness for learning and teaching on the part of Platter (of whom mention has been made above) is afforded by the charming account of the manner in which Pellican came into the possession of the first Hebrew manuscript! Compare Rigggenbach, *Das Chronikon des Konrad Pelikan* (Basle, 1877), p. 16: "Post aliquot dies superveniens Paulus Scriptoris, magnum codicem gestaverat in humeris, talis et tantus vir, a Moguntia ad Pfortzen, in studiis et desideriis meis gratificaretur, quæ probabat valde, quum ipse quoque jam antea graeca didicerat, a Reuchlino eatenus instructus, ut epistolium græce eidem scriptum a Paulo viderim et legerim. Nihil in eum diem mihi acciderat gratius, quam ubi eum codicem grandem hebraicum viderem mihi allatum: erat autem volumen in pergameno scriptum, elegantissimo charactere, magnifice, et cum masoreth, tantæ amplitudinib; quantum præstare posset cutis integra vitulina."

longing, one might almost say of home-sickness, that one cannot help inferring the existence of a most intimate fellowship.* *Pellican* had been the instructor of the Polish dean in the Hebrew language. The Reformer in Friesland bitterly bewails that these studies were then so early broken off by his sudden departure to his native land, since then he had lost the knowledge of this language. Not the Hebrew language alone did *Laski* acquire at the feet of this man. *Oecolampadius* had already begun some years before to expound Isaiah and the Epistle to the Romans in a scientific form to his students, while he expounded the epistles of John in a series of devotional meditations to the townsmen, and that amidst a great influx of the people to his lectures. The animating example of the homily was followed by our superior of the Minorites, and with him by one and another devout cloister brother. Just at this time *Pellican* was expounding Genesis.† We certainly do not err in conjecturing that *Laski* was among the audience; and then he was able to discover the heart's wish of the teacher, "that only the kingdom of Christ may come, the Gospel might be preached, and received with believing ears." The Bishop of Basle, *Christopher von Uttenheim*, to whom the nephew of the Archbishop of Gnesen was no stranger, was not at that time unkindly disposed towards such endeavours; their, as we should say, necessary bearing had not yet become sufficiently apparent, and *Oecolampadius* could still dedicate to the devout and withal learned Bishop his contemplations on the

* Kuyper, ii. 583.

† See his charming letter to Pirkheimer in Heumann, p. 209.

epistles of John, which appeared in print in the year 1524.

While these two men had entered with decided step upon the path of the Reformation, two other attractive forms meet us in the animating surroundings of *Laski* at Basle, men who were not drawn away from the narrowly circumscribed domain of Humanism in the high floodtide of intellectual movement on this side of the Alps. On the equipoise indeed stands the one, *Beatus Rhenanus*. Once the highly gifted scholar of Lefèvre in Paris, then in Basle the intimate friend of *Erasmus*, he did not break with this old master of the studies of humanity when the latter fell out with the Reformers and retired to Freiburg as a sort of pouting corner. That did not hinder our brave Alsatian from diffusing from time to time the writings of *Luther* in Switzerland and greeting *Zwingli* in an interesting letter on the latter's entering upon the pastoral office in Zurich.* His main strength, however, lay in the domain of Humanism. *Erasmus* estimated at no low rate the merit of the highly cultured scholar. To him he dedicated the beautiful exposition of the first Psalm, with the epigrammatic words, "Mitto Beatum Beato," "I send the blessed man [of the Psalm] to Beatus" (the blessed one). This man could not remain a stranger to the constant companion of *Erasmus*. *Laski* also participated in the far-reaching studies of the scholar; and such fruit-bearing participation demanded an exact and loving appreciation of the Roman historians. For *Rhenanus* published not unimportant critical labours on *Tacitus*,

* *Zwingli, Works of*, edited by Schüler and Schulthess (Zurich, 1828), vii., p. 57.

Livy, Pliny the elder, and Velleius Paterculus, during the time of the sojourn of *Laski* in Basle. Even after his return to his native land *Laski* continues in lively correspondence with the Humanists. The distinguished Pole was looked upon by these men as a Mæcenas. *Rhenanus* on one occasion, in a letter to *Laski*, expressly emphasises the fact that he has dedicated a little work to his far-off friend, not—as had become in an increasing degree the manner, or rather the sadly repulsive unmannerliness, among the Humanists of that day—in order to receive a present from prosperous and affluent patrons but in grateful remembrance of former benefits he had received from him in Basle, of the warm affection *Laski* had at all times manifested for him.*

The other prominent form in the circle of our *Laski*'s acquaintances, *Henry Glarean*, separated himself in an equally decided manner as *Erasmus*, in the progress of development, from the Reformation. A finely cultured Humanist was *Glarean*, at first equally intimate with *Zwingli* as with *Erasmus*. This state of things, however, had already become essentially changed at the time when *Laski* went to live with *Erasmus*. For him the Reformational movement was a painful interruption in his agreeable course of study. He got angrily out of the path of the Reformation, and of course also of the leaders

* Gabbema, *Epistolarum Centuriæ Tres* (Harlingæ, 1663), p. 10.—Among the works edited by *Rhenanus* and issued from the press of Froben not long before the time of *Laski*'s stay in Basle was a volume of the collected writings of *Tertullian* (1521), to which he furnished a valuable argument at the head of the several books. The rapturous joy of the scholar on his acquisition of the MS. is described by him with much animation in the preface lying before me.—TR.

of the host, broke off in an ill humour the old associations of friendship, and as time went on turned more and more aside to walk, hand in hand with *Erasmus*, in lonely embittered ways. The influence of such a personality could not fail to leave its traces upon the mind of our *Laski*. Upon a promising start towards the Reformation, to which our Pole had already received no small incitement, such association must act only as a drag ; the great men of the Reformation approached him only in the reflection which their form assumed upon the field of vision of these one-sided, narrow-minded Humanists ; and almost from month to month this reflection became, in the irritated mood of these fiercely assailed people, a more distorted one. The smitten and, moreover, severely wounded ones in the exasperated, unsparing conflict made the refined and sensitive Pole but too conscious of the often grievous sting of a harsh mode of expression. We cannot then wonder if the desire was wanting to him for penetrating, despite such an unpromising exterior, to the heart and core of the controversy. He felt himself, with his injured friends, repelled by the method of the conflict, and then quickly transferred to the assailants the aversion he had thus conceived. The prospect, still regarded as a hopeful one by these Humanist friends, instead of coming to an open violent rupture with the Church, labouring at the peaceful cleansing of it from the evils admitted by them to exist therein, must be more in accord with his whole character, strengthened as this was by his position in the national Church of his native land. With *Glarean* our *Laski* seems to have lived on most intimate terms. After years of separation

the busy and exceedingly diligent Humanist keeps the distant high-placed ecclesiastic fully informed of the course of his studies. We find among his correspondence with Laski communications on the arithmetic of the ancients; the most difficult questions of ancient music are treated; then again information is given of his collection of notes on Livy, studies which even in our own day have received consideration from a man like *Niebuhr*, and which *Glarean* would certainly not have communicated to his friend unless he had been previously assured of the hearty participation of the latter.*

But we too at last have to bid farewell to Basle, and to leave the attractive circle of men in whose midst *A Lasco* was so fully at home, and over whom our description has already lingered too long. More suddenly than he expected, and certainly than he hoped, he had to break the bonds which now attached him and quit that city in which he had known a happiness such as in no other, not even in his native land.

5. THE RETURN HOME BY WAY OF ITALY.

It was in September, 1525, that *Jerome*, the much-travelled royal ambassador, again charged with a diplomatic mission, made a call upon *Erasmus* in Basle. He brought at the same time to his brother a decided instruction from home to leave Basle without delay and to enter upon his homeward journey in slow stages by way of Italy. The state of affairs in Poland had come to such a pass as to

* Compare Gabbema, p. 11 *seq.*; Herzog, *Real-Encyclopädie* (Stuttgart, 1853 *seq.*), v., p. 167.

render desirable the return of the youthful and gifted provost. More severe measures had been taken during the absence of *Laski* against the poison of the Reformation, now ever more widely spreading : it was deemed imperatively necessary to concentrate the forces which it was hoped to turn to account in the event of the outbreak of a conflict. Men reckoned likewise upon the nephew of the Primate and friend of *Erasmus* as a meet champion of the threatened Church. His two brothers had already acknowledged their colours ; they were the decidedly ecclesiastical colours, the anti-Reformational colours of the house of *Laski* ; the same thing, it was almost taken for granted, would be the case with the rising ecclesiastical prince.

The royal ambassador handed to *Erasmus* the passionate and venomous attack upon Luther and his adherents from the pen of that Bishop *Krzycki* already unfavourably known to us.* To employ the friend of *Erasmus* on such an errand, in order in this way to enter into personal communication with the revered head of the Humanists—for this, in the estimation of the mean-spirited defamer, the nephew of his hated archbishop was after all good enough. At the National Diet of 1523 the Bishop, as a talented and facile writer, was urged to the undertaking of this treatise alike by the King and by his colleagues, though certainly the unbridled character of its contents made up no part of their instruction. He now acknowledges, in an accompanying letter to

* Unfortunately the document has not fallen into my hands, even in the ample libraries of St. Petersburg ; its contents have come into my possession only from excerpts and notices in other works.

Erasmus, that the form of the work was influenced by the wish which guided him in its composition, that, namely, of weakening the force of the suspicion that he himself rendered a secret fealty to the views of *Luther*.* As it happens with common minds which love not the truth, he accomplished this end by freely reviling his opponent. It does not appear that *Luther* ever saw the production ; at least, I have not found in his writings any passage referring to it. If he had seen the calumnious book, it would perhaps have been dismissed with the words, " Devil, thou liest ! Buffoon, how thou liest ! O Hans Wolfenbüttel, what a shameless liar art thou, ventest much and sayest nothing, ragest and provest nothing !" † *Erasmus* did not enter upon a review of the document ; it was thus perhaps too strong for him. ‡ He returned the gift by the present of a work from the pen of *Tonstall*, Bishop of London, a man who opposed the Reformation with the same passionate hatred.

Hardly did the Polish friend and guest find time to make himself acquainted with the purport of this invective missive from his native land. He was on the point of taking his departure. It had been planned that he should pass by way of the Alps into Upper Italy, should make a stay for a while in Padua and Venice, and there await further directions as to the time and route of his return. *Erasmus* furnishes his friend, as though he had been a dear son, with letters of introduction to the leading Humanists in those cities where Laski proposed to make a stay. And with what warmth of language

* Compare *Tomiciana*, vii. 344. † *Luther*, xxvi. 6.
‡ *Erasmus*, p. 783.

did he commend him to such men as *Egnatius*, *Lupsetus*, *Casimbrotus*, himself the prince of Humanists!*

On the 5th October, 1525, *Laski* set out from Basle.† He was accompanied on his journey by *Karl Uttenhove*, a gifted young man from Ghent, who lived with *Erasmus* as a sort of amanuensis, was frequently employed by him, specially on the occasion of despatching important letters, and now again was commissioned to convey a message to Rome. As regards his Latin, the master has, it is true, to complain that the man of Ghent did not employ the classical language with the same ease and skill as the young friend from Poland; but he was pleased with the faithful devotion of the Fleming, and association with him afforded a solace to the now elderly man.‡ We are specially interested in this travelling companion from the fact that probably on this journey to Rome the bonds of attachment were formed with the family which after decades of years so closely and faithfully bound *John*, the half-brother of this Charles, to our *Laski*. Charles, too, was a welcome companion to him on the way; *A Lasco* informs his *Amerbach* concerning him, that he could not have wished a more faithful guide or a more agreeable comrade.

The first letter preserved to us from the time of these travels was written at Venice, 26th November,

* *Erasmus*, p. 779.

† Erasmus describes the parting in the strong words, "Multos homines et inter hos Erasmus occidit, tantum sui desiderium reliquit abiens, cum quibuscumque habuit consuetudinem" (784).

‡ Herminjard, ii. 183.

1525, full of longing after the friends at Basle.* Whether the travellers tarried so long on the route, or a stay of some weeks in Padua had already preceded, cannot be learnt. For the present our friend remained a considerable time in the city of the doges; he had sent a messenger to Cracow, the return of whom he had to await. He was, however, at this time strongly drawn towards Spain. In Madrid, in a narrow chamber of one of the towers of the fortifications (with a gloomy outlook upon the desolate bank of the Manzanares),† *Francis I.* was languishing in ignominious captivity. His proud entry into Bologna as victor at Marignano had been witnessed by the brothers *Laski*, then all unconscious that one of them would be the King's faithful companion in captivity. From the time that *Jerome* took with him his two brothers upon the embassy (1523), *Stanislas* had remained at the court of the French king. *Francis I.* had taken much pleasure in the refined young Pole, so greatly skilled in the languages, who, moreover, distinguished himself in all knightly arts, and had assigned him a position in his own immediate surroundings. Henceforth *Stanislas* did not quit the King's side. He accompanied him on his expedition to Italy, spent with him the

* "Plane video, Amerbachie clarissime, verum esse comitem voluptatis moerorem, qui cum incredibilem semper ex tua consuetudine sim solitus capere et voluptatem et fructum, nunc tanto ejus desiderio teneat, ut non litteris modo sed nec verbis quidem explicere satis possum. . . . Jamque vale amicorum amicissime et me ut coepisti ama et Erasmo meo subinde commendes, Glareano nunc profecto scribere non narravit. Eum tuum et Beatum ac etiam Pellicanum meum ex me cupio diligenter salutari."

† Michelet, *Histoire de France au XVI. Siècle* (Paris, 1851), viii., p. 251.

winter of 1524 in Lombardy,* and then also suffered with him the disgrace of Pavia. *Laski* was among the number of the captives; as a Pole, however, he received his liberty, but remained of free choice in the train of the royal prisoner. At first he hastened to Paris to communicate the sad tidings; thence he journeyed to Madrid, whither the King had been taken. In the murky winter days the King was shut up without a prospect in the solitary tower. *Johannes* would fain pay a visit to his noble-hearted brother. It is probable, however, that he received in those days the intelligence of the latter's departure. *Margaret of Valois* had repaired with all speed to join her suffering, so dearly beloved brother. The journey was certainly a hazardous enterprise, but one which the self-sacrificing sisterly love of the royal *mignonne* did not for a moment shrink from undertaking. Her coming restored the drooping brother to life. When, a few weeks later, she returned to France, she took with her the faithful Pole as a travelling companion.† For the Polish ambassador in Toledo, the renowned *John Dantiscus*, the departure of his influential countryman had proved very inconvenient; he had hoped to be able through his intervention to transmit certain letters to the Emperor when the latter held his first interview with his royal captive, at which no ambassador was suffered to be present.

Week after week passed away for our *Laski* in

* Michelet (viii. 228) cites the passage of Guicciardini, "Le roi s'amusait, donnant tout au plaisir, rien aux affaires. Un hiver d'Italie, passé ainsi, lui semblait assez doux."

† *Tomiciana*, viii. 310.

Venice without the return of the messenger despatched by him ; as late as January in the following year he had not reached Cracow. *Laski* bewailed his fate as one murdered on the road, an event of only too frequent occurrence in those troubled days, in which disorder prevailed on all the highways. A winter spent in Venice was even at that time a delight for which one would willingly pay by the uncertainty as to that which was to be begun in the immediate future. Most of the Poles of good position were wont to alight at the Fondaco de Tedeschi, a still imposing edifice to the east of the Rialto Bridge on the Grand Canal. The wealthy and tasteful German merchants had not spared the adornment of their property in a manner worthy of the then queen of the seas ; and Venice entertained in those days, to an extent hardly reached before or since, a multitude of artists, in order to give the most perfect expression as regards form to such an endeavour in every province. *Titian* and *Giorgione* vied with each other in exhibiting the best products of their art upon the German Chamber of Commerce. On the side nearest the canal the pictures were still fresh upon the building which *Giorgione* had painted as an art-decoration ; and *Titian*, whose genius was now entering upon its lofty flight, had continued them. What must then a sail in the gondola have been along the *Canale Grande*, where all these glories, then just called into existence, saluted one in a vigorous present,—not as now, looked down, as from a lost world, strangely and sadly upon such entirely different surroundings ? Whether *Laski* was brought into more intimate connection with *Titian* (as he had formed the acquaintance of *Holbein* at

Basle in the house of his friend *Amerbach*), all information is wanting to us; we are rather inclined to doubt it. Just at this time *Titian* was contracting a friendship with the worthless *Aretino*, and so long as this continued the pure-minded *Laski* could find there no point of attachment.

We have mainly indeed to seek our friend in the circle of the leading Humanists, to whom he had been introduced by *Erasmus* with such warm commendation. *Erasmus*, in after-letters, gives thanks alike to *Casimbrotus* and to the renowned *Egnatius* for the hearty reception accorded by each of these men to his Polish friend.* The intimate associate of *Froben* and of *Amerbach* would certainly when in Venice have the entrance to the house of the no less eminent master-printer *Aldus*. The best houses were open to the young Pole. It is true the Doge, to whom the uncle of *Laski* had more than a decade before delivered the royal message, was no longer living. His successor, too, the almost nonagenarian *Grimani*, whose firm characteristic expression of countenance stands forth livingly before our eyes in the immortal drawings of *Titian*, was already dead; and *Andrew Gritti* now wore the proud tiara. He had in earlier years pined as a prisoner in Constantinople, was companion of the changing fortune of *Francis I.* in Italy, and yet astute and adroit enough to keep his Venetian army out of the battle of Pavia. Gloomy days had supervened for the maritime supremacy of Venice: away in the East the Sultan, with evil boding, was raising his victorious head, a source of anxiety to two powers alike—Poland, whose fron-

* Compare *Erasmus*, pp. 1105, 1107.

tiers were contiguous to those of Turkey, and Venice, the queen of the Mediterranean. In the sense of common danger to both peoples, the presence of the nephew of the Polish primate will not have passed unobserved, albeit no notification of a meeting between *Laski* and the Doge has been preserved to us.

Already February was approaching, and still the messenger from Cracow had not arrived, nor had any intelligence from thence come to hand with new instructions as to the course of action. Before Easter (1st April) *Laski* with certainty expected a decision ; perhaps the issue might be, as he mentions to his friend in Basle, that ere his return he would once more pay a visit to Switzerland and France. The delay was painful to him. He had borrowed of *Amerbach* money for the journey, and, through the failure of the messenger to appear, was unable to liquidate the debt within the given period. At length, in March, the long-wished-for tidings from home came to hand, and the return journey was at once entered upon. As early as the 8th of April he is able to report his arrival in Posen. Here he has soon discovered in the busy trading city merchants who are going to Basle, and are ready to take with them a part of the sum to which he was indebted. They carry also valuable presents to the friend in Basle : two sable-skins and two bundles of ermine-skins.

Only two days does *Laski* make his abode in Posen, and then hastens on to Cracow, where, after an absence of two years and a half, he arrives in the middle of April.

VI.

THE LAST DECADE AS A CATHOLIC IN HIS NATIVE LAND.

I. TRYING EXPERIENCES AT HOME.

MORE difficult than ten years before was it now to our *Laski* to adapt himself to the old relations in his native land. Even in those days, in which Poland was preparing to ascend to the culminating point in its history, it was not easy for a child of that land who had breathed for a few years the different atmosphere in the haunts of the Humanists at once to feel himself in his right place and at his ease again at home.

At first the eyes were turned backward, in spirit at least, to prolong his life with his friends. An active interchange of letters was kept up; only isolated fragments has a happy destiny preserved to us,— more of letters to *Laski*, than it has of those from his hand. A fortunate discovery of some of the latter, which agreeably supplement the few specimens in the *Complete Edition*,* leads to the hope that, here or there in ancient collections of manuscripts, there may yet lie hidden letters which shall afford to a

* Kuyper (ii. 547, 548) has only two letters of *Laski* for a period of fourteen years, strictly speaking, for the first forty years of his life. Fourteen others were placed at our disposal.

later and more favoured explorer welcome reward for researches often so toilsome and fruitless. From the letters of his friends, too, we are able to discover what the contents of *Laski's* letters may have been. The old companions in study enable him to share in the progress of their scientific labours ; even those courses of their investigations apparently most remote, they do not deem too much out of the way for them to invite *Laski* to accompany them therein, by means of detailed communications. Here an erewhile companion in study dedicates to him a work on geography ; there he is by another kept fully informed concerning his edition of an ancient classic ; then again he receives desired information as to the art of music among the ancients ; in short, we see how the energetic impulse after knowledge on the part of his master *Erasmus* has passed over to our *Laski*, who enthusiastically names himself the scholar of *Erasmus*. Briefer and more scanty are the communications concerning the great world-moving questions of the day. Hardly more than so far as the high-swelling waves penetrate into the work-room of the scholar does the nephew of the Primate of Poland receive intelligence thereof, mostly allusions conveyed in a peevish humour, because coming from those who feel themselves hard-pressed and straitened by the resistless current of events, and wish only for a quiet corner of the earth where they may weave their web around them, and be able to sulk over the course of events, which so essentially contradicts their cherished expectations.

Mere epistolary correspondence did not afford sufficient amends to our friend, in his sense of isolation, for the copious enjoyment of personal

intercourse. As he receives tidings of a dangerous illness of *Erasmus*, he would fain leave everything as it stands, and hasten to the bedside of the revered master, to enjoy with him the last hours of social communion. But the duties of his vocation hold him fast with indissoluble bonds. Thus he seeks to attract the friends to Poland. Within a very little he had succeeded in prevailing on his dearest companion *Amerbach* to make such a change of abode. There is still preserved a letter from *Amerbach* to *Zasius*, belonging to the year 1526,* in which the Basle jurisconsult relates that he had a few days before (the letter was written on [21st August] the Tuesday before St. Bartholomew's Day) received from *John a Lasco* a call to Poland upon the most brilliant terms; eventually, however, he decides on remaining in Basle, from the consideration that he cannot leave his friends, and from that lively home-feeling which makes us, as he beautifully expresses himself, think the smoke of our native country more bright than the fire of a strange land ("dein quod ita nobis natura insitum est, ut fumum patrium igni alieno luculentiorem credamus"). In those days there was prevailing in general throughout Poland the wish to afford a refuge for illustrious men, specially such scholars as, being discontented with the noisy progress of events, desired for themselves a sequestered retreat. *Krzycki* in glowing language invited *Erasmus* to flee from the agitation without to the quiet Poland, where untroubled he could live for his studies, and undisturbed could enjoy the high esteem and

* Stinzing, *Ulrich Zasius* (Basle, 1857), p. 373

homage of the Polish nobility, liberally rendered to this king of science. But *Erasmus* rightly judged even Poland to be no longer such a lauded place of shelter.*

For an enjoyable life of quiet, in epistolary correspondence with his friends without, our *Laski* had not been recalled to his native land. The nephew of the Archbishop of Gnesen already occupied too high a post for the fatherland in the distresses which threatened it not also to have counted upon him. In the opinion of *Erasmus*, the Church needed just such men as he had discovered, in such brilliant prominence, in this his youthful friend. He writes to the Bishop of Plozk that no one can be of more salutary influence for the Church of the present day than men who, to their deep regret, have been called away from their charming studies of philosophy in order by their counsel to aid the fatherland.† This advice, however, so far as it aimed at *Laski*, was distrusted; and our friend had first to clear himself of the suspicion which had cast a dark shadow upon him. While the Dean of Gnesen was dwelling so long abroad, especially in Basle—whence full many an evil report had reached Cracow, that there also the terrible heresy was already gaining ever firmer ground—the intelligence reached his native land, that this priest of the Romish Church had already in Zurich visited *Zwingli* (whose name, it is true, was not so well known, and therefore not in such

* *Erasmus*, p. 1127.

† *Ibid.*, p. 1127: “Orbi christiano nulli sunt magis utiles quam qui reluctantes a philosophiæ dulcissimis studiis ad patriæ consulendum revocantur.”

ill-repute, as that of *Luther*), and rumour was at once busy, particularly in the circles hostile and adversely disposed towards the Archbishop, in branding the nephew of the Primate as a heretic, and declaring of him that he had, like so many a priest, already taken a wife. If he had only followed the hundredfold-repeated example in the Church of his native land, and associated with a woman for lust, the accusation would not have been so aggravated ; but to wish lifelong to share sorrow and joy with a legitimate wife in faithful covenant, well-pleasing to God, that was in the estimation of the Pharisees of those days a shameful misdeed. To see his own favourite nephew, in whom his hope had for years recognised his eventual successor, in the ranks of the apostates who had severed themselves from the mother Church, would have been for the aged Archbishop the bitterest ingredient in his cup of sorrow. From him indeed proceeded the urgent direction to quit the notorious city of Basle without delay ; from Italy the Polish primate had not yet received tidings that there too Reformational movements had manifested themselves. On that account the journey was to be made not by way of Augsburg, Leipsic, and even Wittenberg, but rather by the indirect route by way of the Alps and Italy, and that slowly, with a prolonged stay in Venice, in order to get any questionable tendencies expelled by the vicinity of Rome.

Our *Laski*, when at length he had returned home, could frankly and without reserve appear in his uncle's presence. He had not married a wife abroad, as his detractors would fain have had it believed with regard to him ; and otherwise than in

conjugal union, he, the man of pure and rigid morals, had no desire for any intimacy with woman. But with regard to the other accusation also, he felt himself guiltless. *Merle d'Aubigné* supposes that in the oath of purgation we must assume a fall, on the part of the young man, from the height to which he had attained in the intercourse with the friends at Basle.* To so harsh a verdict we cannot by any means subscribe. Our *Laski*, at the time of his return to his own country, differed in no degree as yet in his view of the Reformation from that of his master, *Erasmus*. With him, he was fully convinced of the necessity for a reformation of the Church in its head and its members; on his departure from home he had carried with him this conviction, and in the many travels by which he was brought into contact with persons of the highest ecclesiastical rank, he had been favoured with ample opportunity for witnessing the deep and painful wounds from which the Church was suffering. With *Erasmus*, too, he was convinced that the greatest injuries had been inflicted upon it by the servants of the Church itself, and that the most passionate complaint with regard to them and their unspiritual life was only too fully justified. But, in common with his teacher, he still cherished the hope that this necessary reformation of the Church could be accomplished without that breach which, to his deepest regret, he saw widening from day to day. With the whole intensity

* *Merle d'Aubigné, Réformation en Europe*, vii. 572: “Toutefois ce serment prêté par De Lasco fut ainsi que sa mondanité une véritable chute!” It would have been equally difficult for the revered historian of the Reformation to have given the proof for his second assertion—that of A Lasco's worldly-mindedness.

and fidelity of his heart, *Laski* clung to his mother Church, outside of which he could not conceive of any salvation. For him, the Pole, who had grown up to manhood in the ecclesiastical and political views of his uncle and the court, as of the whole clergy of his native land, all rupture with the Church was a rupture with the fatherland ; neither of these would his heart, glowing with affection for Church and fatherland, at that time have been able to endure. That Christ may demand of His disciple even a sacrifice like this was a thought for the inspiring of which the evangelic spirit which animated the Reformers had not up to this time come personally near to him.

At first he lived in foreign lands as a Pole, for whom the question which impelled the solitary man in his relations at home ever farther and farther upon the way that leads to separation was as yet only something remote. The contact with *Zwingli* may have been only a very fleeting one, lasting enough indeed to press the goad into his soul which impels him henceforth into the depths of the Gospel, decisive enough to lead him after decades of years still with grateful heart to describe *Zwingli* as the man of God who, with powerful hand, had given him the first impulse to that movement which can only find its issue in the Evangelical Church, but yet not so long and constraining as to call forth from his conscience at once the fateful sacrifice of decision. That important passage, in which *Laski* after thirty years speaks of his meeting with *Zwingli*, has been turned to account, in the absence of more detailed notices as to the course of his development, generally at the expense of psychological truth.

Oecolampadius and *Pellican* themselves had not yet, at the time of his stay in Basle, taken the final step which must lead to an open rupture. The hero-form of the German Reformer had unhappily been met with by our Pole only in the refraction in which this form appeared in the vicinity of *Erasmus*. It was no longer the clear, great light which at the first blaze of the Reformation the distinguished Humanist likewise had seen and recognised ; at that time the mist had already risen which more and more rendered it impossible for *Erasmus* to recognise and appreciate, behind the dim, shifting outlines, the true features of the leader of the Reformation. The fatal and incurable rupture between the leader of the Reformation and the acknowledged head of the studies of humanity had already taken place at the time of the companionship with *Erasmus*. The passionate, irritated language of the Wittenberger at the same time wounded the guest, who, out of sympathy with the master so harshly assailed, chivalrously espoused his side, and thereby augmented for himself the trial of piercing through the repulsive exterior to the golden heart of the Reformer. Repelled by the form, his access to the contents was made less easy. That which *Erasmus* at first rejoined, in the fine tone of superiority which he knew how to wield with such ease and dexterity, to the attacks of *Luther*, must appear fully convincing to a mind which, under the spell of a so-called sound common sense, had not yet cast a glance into the fearful depths of sin, the utter corruption of human nature, which not yet, standing beside this abyss, had cried only for grace, as a hart crieth after the water-brooks ; must commend itself to a mind which

had not yet trodden the path of an Augustine and a Paul to the point of recognising that we are saved by grace alone through faith which is in Christ Jesus. This was at that time still to our *Laski* a mystery sealed with seven seals ; and the harsh, unsparing language of the Reformer did not call forth in the refined Pole the desire to unseal this mystery. God was leading him in those days by another path, but to the same goal.

A further element of difficulty came also into operation. Our friend had, moreover, opportunity in Basle of seeing the questionable compact made between the movement of the Reformation and the revolutionary insurrection and agitation in the peasant class ; and who would guarantee for him that the current arising in the religious domain would not issue and run out in a political, demagogic domain ? They were certainly very ominous notes which, as early as 1524 and 1525, were raised by the peasants of Upper Swabia in their twelve articles. There, on the other side of the Rhine, in the neighbouring Waldshut, *Hubmaier* and *Reublin* were engaged in agitating ; in Klettgau *Münzer* roused the peasantry in the autumn of 1524, after, expelled from Mühlhausen, he had retreated by way of Nuremberg and Basle. The men who headed the excited crowds had till but recently been on friendly terms with the Reformers in Germany and Switzerland. Despite the notorious rupture with them, what an easy and convenient mode of reproach it was for the enemies of the Reformation to characterise these insurrections, which awakened so much apprehension, as the legitimate fruits of the Reformation ! If one did not join in such reproach, this was in itself a

result of having been brought under the power of the Gospel. For *Laski*, however, such an opinion had about it something manifestly just ; and he had moved principally in those quarters in which he would be confirmed in this his conclusion.

With the impressions thus acquired, our friend had returned to his native land and entered on the ministry of his church. He was soon indeed able to convince his uncle that the reports spread abroad by his rivals and detractors, concerning his leaning towards the Reformation, were false. This, however, did not suffice for the Archbishop. That which the opponents had pretty loudly whispered must be publicly refuted ; and so he required of his nephew, that he should publicly confirm that which he had privately acknowledged to him, and should do so by an oath of purgation in presence of one of his most decided opponents, the Bishop of Cracow. The document of this oath, in the handwriting of *Laski*, is still preserved in the Privy Record Office at Konigsberg.* He protests in this solemn declaration that he has read, with the papal licence (*ex indulto Apostolico*), many writings even of those who have separated themselves from the Romish Church ; but that he has wittingly and willingly adopted no opinion, no article of faith which is in contradiction to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. If he has fallen through inadvertence, if he has become involved in an error, which truly may also happen to the most learned and holiest of men, he disavows this publicly and emphatically, and acknowledges of his own free will that he feels no

* Reproduced in full by Kuyper, ii. 547.

desire to follow any sects or doctrines which are opposed to the unity of the Romish Church and its regulations, and that he wishes only firmly to retain that which has been accepted and approved by the Romish Church. In like manner, he vows to the Holy See, his superiors and bishops, a life-long obedience in all things permitted and honourable. "That swear I ; so help me God and the holy Gospels of God."

Our *Laski* was in those days in sacred earnest with regard to this oath, which perfectly reflects the position in relation to his Church still occupied by him. Anything for him rather than a separation from the one holy, Apostolic mother Church. Outside of it there is no other. It stands indeed in need of reformation ; but, as the bearer of the truth, it carries in itself the power of healing, and will of its own power overcome and heal the ills which his spiritual eye has likewise recognised. Verily it was not fear of being deprived of his benefices, and having to wander forth upon a painful martyrdom, that forced these words upon reluctant lips ; and just as little was it respect and filial affection for the uncle ; it was his full conviction, which only that man would have a right to designate as a declension, yea as a fall, who was in a position to afford the indisputable proof that he had already, inwardly liberated from the Romish Church, attained to the height of evangelic truth. Such proof has not yet been furnished ; nor will it be in the future, even though more abundant sources should be opened to our research.

After all the malignant calumnies had been thus conspicuously reduced to silence, our *Laski* applied

himself with the liveliest zeal to the duties of his vocation. Cracow indeed would have been capable of en chaining the young ecclesiastical prince if his mind had been set upon worldly entertainment and enjoyment. Here, at the court, festival was succeeding festival. *Bona*, the new queen, an Italian princess, passionately fond of pleasure, but also delighting in intrigues and machinations, dearly loved a brilliant court. Then came the lively, excited life at the capital, produced by the constant apprehension of some severe and disastrous reverse in arms. On the north the Prussians assumed a threatening attitude, unwilling to bear the yoke of the Poles ; on the east the Russians were lying in wait ; on the south the victorious *Soliman* was ominously lifting his head. Where his wild hordes trod all was over for decades of years with the prosperity of the people ; and Poland's frontier was contiguous along a wide tract with the ill-defined boundaries of the threatening Turkish neighbour. Courtly festivals and wild din of arms were not, however, to the taste of the pupil of *Erasmus*. With a sigh, he writes to Basle, "Here only battles, dreadful battles, nothing else."* He flees from the royal court and plunges into the administration of his wide ecclesiastical jurisdiction.† But violently, like a startled roe, is he ever afresh drawn away, and must keep his eye fixed upon the turbulent course of political events ; members of his house have laid hold of the spokes of the rolling wheel ; fraternal

* "Hic bella, horrida bella, præterea nihil."

† He mentions to Amerbach that he would gladly resign for a journey to Basle that administration, "quam in primo
huc reditu meo, aulam fugiens, susceperam."

love does not suffer him to close his eyes to that which may draw the family itself into a common distress.*

2. LASKI'S ACTIVITY IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL DOMAIN.

Against his will our *Laski* had been drawn even into the tumult of battles and all the disquiet of wildly surging party conflicts. He may well often have sighed at the thought of being thus for years together forced away from the calmer island of retired studies after which he longed. But the political sea, rising in mighty waves, was yet not able to draw down the resolute swimmer into its depths. We see him appear above the surface ever

* In order to follow the thread of the narrative, it is necessary to understand the part played by the Laskis between the years 1526 and 1535. Upon the death of the young and chivalrous Lewis of Hungary, nephew to the King of Poland, in conflict with the hordes of Soliman (29th August, 1526), the throne was claimed by John Zapolya, Vayvode of Transylvania, Sigismund's brother-in-law, and by Ferdinand of Austria, brother of the Emperor. The former was favoured by Francis I., and the latter by Charles V. The Polish nobility sympathised undisguisedly with the cause of Zapolya. Sigismund tried to bring about an agreement between the claimants. Jerome Laski threw himself unreservedly on the side of Zapolya, to whose service he sacrificed the best days of his life. After visiting Paris, London, Venice, in his interest, he repaired to Constantinople towards the end of 1527, where he passed some months in securing the support of Soliman. Eventually, at Ratisbon, he made good the claim of Zapolya to the throne. He was rewarded with the lands of Kesmark, at the foot of the Carpathians, while the bishopric of Vesprim was bestowed upon his brother John. In 1533 the governor of Transylvania was murdered at the instigation of the treacherous Gritti, son of the Doge of Venice, who aimed at supplanting Zapolya by the aid of Soliman. Gritti paid the penalty of his life. Zapolya, however, suspected Jerome of complicity, and ac-

and anon, straining every nerve to cast the anchor of his life's ship in that firm ground in which God, by the peculiar leading of His providence, would hold him fast. We must again retrace our steps for a few years, in order to accompany him upon the path of his spiritual development, so far as only very isolated traces enable us thus to accompany him.

The political events, as also the troubles of his native land, specially as occasioned by the continued far-reaching disorders and vicissitudes of war in the neighbouring States, would in themselves suffice to force somewhat into the background the seriously pressing religious questions;* but for Poland, as other lands, these threatened to assume too much of a burning character to admit either of being passed over in silence or forcibly suppressed. While, in Germany especially, they were standing in the very forefront of the whole movement of the age, their giant shadows also fell threateningly upon Poland, which had the reputation of being such a stronghold

cordingly imprisoned him at Ofen. The tidings reached Johannes only in 1534. He instantly made the most heroic efforts for the liberation of his beloved brother, and was at length successful. Zapolya, who owed his throne to Jerome, at length yielded to the expostulations raised on every side, and released his ambassador from the shameful captivity. After retiring for a time to his estates at Kesmark, Jerome proffered his services to Ferdinand, by whom they were eagerly accepted. He had laboured from the year 1530 for the establishment of peace between the rival candidates, and this end he finally attained in 1535. The bearing of the two claimants towards the Reformation is fully examined by Dalton. For the evidence on this point, and for a list of authorities, the historian must be referred to the original work.

* The Bishop of Breslau, too, complains in a letter to the Pope of the year 1531 (*Theiner, Vetera Monumenta*, ii. 472) that, owing to the Turkish war, the King has not the time for applying a remedy to the ecclesiastical disorders.

of Catholicism. We have already observed at an earlier stage how in the old edifice there began to be heard strange creakings. In the years which had now expired no thought had been given to the improvement of the defective places ; it was thought that enough had been done when the attempt had been made to suppress every murmur. The sterner measures, however, to which recourse was had, were no longer successful against the spirit of the Reformation violently bursting forth. Even the severest menaces proved no more than blows dealt upon the water.

Mention has already been made how the evangelic movement first came to a head in Dantsic, then the most important seaport town of Poland. Whilst our friend was pursuing his studies abroad, the Archbishop of Gnesen had himself repaired to the town, then in the fervour of excitement, though without any substantial result from his visit. The Primate was ill-adapted for the quelling of such a fermentation, for the very reason that he was unacquainted with its nature. That is made fully manifest from a document in which he expounds his opinion with regard to the Dantsic differences.* On the one side stands the ecclesiastical prince, well versed in jurisprudence, who sees a Church with its doctrine unassailed from Apostolic times ; on the other side he sees opinions of people addicted to innovation (*neoterici*), who like to follow their own judgment in particular rites and ecclesiastical regulations. In connection with such a division, the man who has grown grey in the observances of his Church

* *Tomiciana*, vii. 387.

cannot for a moment doubt on which side stands right and truth.

Equally little result had the mission of the four royal counsellors, among whom was numbered *Jerome Laski* (1525). Even the most skilful statecraft shows itself powerless in the solution of questions which have arisen out of true faith, and are advanced by a conscience established in the peace of the Gospel. These are no other than voices out of a kingdom which is not of this world, and their abiding guardian is that holy form which has overcome the world. By way of rejoinder to the decision of these counsellors, the Protestants of Dantsic sent, it is true, a long detailed defence of their doctrines to the King. *Krzycki*, of whose incisive and facile pen the bishops had gladly availed themselves in the difficult questions of the faith ever since he had won his spurs by his defamatory writing against Luther, was appointed to compose the written reply which was then delivered to the Protestant deputies of Dantsic by the Bishop of Cracow. Both writings are to be prized as voices from the first days of the Reformation, and seem from their nature to demand a comparison.* In the one writing breathes the language of conscience, which rises against gross distortion of Divine truth, against abuses crying to Heaven in the Church and among its ministers, the clear, firm, fearless word of a disciple who has attained to the all-surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ, and, from the height of this free watch-tower, is ready to give up even the Church, which he sees corrupted in worldly ways, to separate from it in order to be

* *Tomiciana*, vii. 358, 400.

henceforth bound to the Saviour alone. We gather from the tone of the discourse that these freed ones have travelled by the bitter way of deep knowledge of sin to the abyss of utter despairing of their own righteousness, but that at this very abyss they have been saved of grace alone. The episcopal answer, on the other hand, is couched in a tone of superiority, frigid, taking its stand upon the legal ground of the Church as the only body of Christ, and, from the aristocratic height of this secularised standpoint, dismissing in a few words the complaints and grievances of this little, disobedient people. No trace of any pity for their troubles, no intelligence for the cry of anguish wrung from a conscience which is concerned about its salvation, as though they were no spiritual fathers, only police-officers of the man there in Rome. But the days for such decrees, as also for finding obedience and subjection among those who had tasted the liberty of the children of God, the "good old days," were irrevocably past, even for the priests and bishops of Poland.

About the time of these negotiations our *Laski* returned home. Even during his absence he had, through the interest of his uncle, been appointed administrator in Gnesen. He seems to have found this new dignity awaiting him as a sort of welcome on his return to Posen ; at any rate, he adds the title for the first time, in his joy at the attainment of this office, to a signature in a letter from this place. It would appear to us that the new office corresponded to his wishes ; it afforded him the desired opportunity of escaping the life and movement at the noisy and bustling court, and in greater retirement living for his vocation. With all

earnestness he joined in the work of ecclesiastical life. We have unhappily no evidence in what sense he participated in the measures now deemed urgent against the supposed seditious ones, or whether he approved of all the measures adopted by his Church. With regard to particular phenomena, of which he received tidings, he could certainly point to similar incidents in Switzerland and the evil consequences which had already attended them.

The King still wavered for a short time as regards having recourse to more serious measures after the episcopal letter against the Dantsic insurgents had exploded ineffectually. A really devout mind may certainly have paralysed for him the arm that would hastily draw the sword in matters of faith. And then there was the unfavourable character of the time—everywhere the swelling waves of political disorder ; threatening foes along almost the whole length of his frontiers, specially in the east and south ; and then the serious complications with the German Grand Master not yet brought to a peaceful solution. Everybody felt that a storm, pregnant with decisive consequences, was, as it were, in the air in that tempest-charged age ; and men sought as far as possible to keep their hands free, that at the moment of the discharge they might be able to appear with undivided strength on the field of conflict. *Sigismund* knew that in connection with this expected course of war-like events his kingdom would be threatened in the first line ; and political caution must suggest to him not on the eve of the crisis, out of sheer light-heartedness, too greatly to irritate the people of Dantsic, and to play with that which constituted his

most important key to the sea and the outlet for his commerce. And yet he was not permitted to defer proceeding with decision, when those about him had succeeded in persuading him that the prime source of the whole rebellious movement was not of a religious but of a revolutionary nature, the perilous rising of the people against the hereditary power of the nobles and kings. With the assailing of the Church, the two other main buttresses of the State were threatened.

Almost everywhere, with the proclamation of the freedom of the Gospel, there had penetrated into the lower ranks of the people the consciousness, now so oppressive, of their position of bondage and deprivation of civil rights under their lords and mighty ones. Here and there, goaded on by deceivers or deceived, the unhappy masses had already attempted by violence to throw off the yoke, now that they had become conscious of its full weight, so intolerable for them. The peasants, once aroused, had broken out in ungoverned fury, with almost simultaneous action, in the most varied and remote localities ; burning and destroying on their way, they had unfurled the standard of revolt and gone forth against the castles and strongholds of their tyrants, like a fierce, blood-red, avenging host, intent on exacting reparation for centuries of injustice ; and had at the same time taken upon themselves to discharge the functions alike of accuser and judge and executioner. That which had been done by the Swabian peasants was attempted likewise by their East Prussian companions in suffering, not in imitation of that which was done in South Germany ; at least, the proof for such imitation has not been given.

Like conditions have only forced open the valve, and the steam everywhere plenteously accumulated has escaped from its narrow enclosure with a shrill hissing. What then if the harsh note should penetrate deep into the forests or the desolate marshy plains of Poland, where the unspeakably wretched kmetons dragged out their slavish existence, if, as was not to be doubted, the note should there too find an intelligent response? The inflammable material was indeed abundantly piled up. The nobles, the clergy, instinctively felt the danger, and so it became easy to persuade the King that every act of concession on the ecclesiastical side would only afford support to the threatened insurrection of the lower classes against all authority. This representation, as also the profiting by its use, was charged with fatal effects for the Romish Church. It is to be enumerated among the most prominent marks of the Divine truth of the Reformation that, with the same sacred earnestness with which it dissociated itself from the humanistic studies which, in proud seclusion, took no care for the people, it now refused to make common cause with the tumultuous multitudes, but following the Gospel alone, gave unto God that which is God's, and to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's. But the Romish Church in Poland too had lulled itself to sleep, in the fond supposition that only one and the same revolutionary movement was to be perceived in the Reformation and in the risings of the peasants, and composing itself under this delusion, had let pass unused the time of its visitation for healing the inner defects.

The clergy in Poland urged upon the King, con-

vinced of the threatening danger, the necessity for instantly taking severe measures. No time was now to be lost. That which was manifesting itself in Dantsic was repeated, though in a milder form, in Thorn, in Elbing, in Braunsberg, in Posen, in so many other places then under Polish sway. Yea, even in Cracow, and farther in the interior of the land, there were witnessed strange flashes of lightning. At the National Diet held in Petrikow, only at the close of which our *Laski* returned home, the religious disturbances formed a main subject of excited debate. In the very message to the provincial diets, in which the King enumerates the subjects on which counsel is to be taken by way of preparation for the National Diet, it was stated that the King had indeed made peace with the Duke of Prussia, but that the whole land was still confused and endangered by the presence of the Lutheran sect. Already the peasants too, after the example of the peasants in Germany, and upon the pretext of evangelical freedom, had taken up arms against their masters, had slain many of them, and reduced their dwellings to ashes. Only swift measures of force, we are told, were now in a position to extirpate this widely diffused pestilence.* The National Diet in alarm gave its sanction to such measures. The King himself, at the head of a great retinue, marched against Dantsic. Thrown upon its own resources alone, the town ventured upon no resistance; helpless, it was obliged to submit to all the conditions imposed.† The Reformational movement

* *Tomiciana*, viii. 9.

† Hartknoch, *Preussische Kirchenhistorie* (Leipsic, 1686), p. 667; and, yet more fully, *Tomiciana*, viii. 40.

was accordingly delayed for a few years ; suppressed, as the hastily tranquillised Poles believed, it was not by any means.

The spirit which had animated the last National Diet at Petrikow was naturally transplanted to the ecclesiastical assembly which the Archbishop of Gnesen summoned for the following year at Leczyc (1527), and in which our *Laski* took part. The bishoprics of Breslau and Cujavia were specially signalised as infected with the heretical plague. It was resolved to proceed vigorously against the recognised heretics, as also against those only suspected of heresy, and that upon the basis of the severe measures adopted in the previous assemblies, to set aside all fear in the carrying out of the same, to have only God, the faith, and the holy religion before one's eyes, and in connection therewith to spare neither money nor toil.* Here, for the first time, mention is made of an attempt not merely to suppress the heresy with strong hand, but also to instruct the people. May we perhaps trace this turn of affairs to the influence of our dean, who had opportunity enough for recognising that this spirit could no longer be quelled by violent measures alone ? The assembly resolved, namely : " Since even the most searching investigation and chastisement would avail but little to root out this sect, unless the genuine pasture of the Word of God is applied and taught by true Catholic men, who stand high on account of their own works and example, and who, by their sound doctrine, can bring men to reject the

* Friese, *Kirchengesch. des Königreichs Polen* (Breslau, 1786), pp. 2, 47.

evil and to choose the good, it is ordained that the archbishops and bishops, particularly those of Breslau* and Cujavia, shall maintain at their courts, metropolitan, cathedral, and collegiate churches, and in particular those where the Lutheran sect appears still to be spreading, learned men, theologians and preachers of the word of God, who shall be able to make known and expound to the orthodox the Gospel of Christ, the Holy Scripture, by thorough instruction and a good discourse."

We have no means of knowing to what extent the several bishops followed this wise counsel in their jurisdictions ; sundry indications lead to the conclusion that matters did not go beyond good resolutions. But our *Laski* rested not. Repeatedly did he urge upon the leader of the Humanists to give the King of Poland hints and advice ; at length the cautious man gave way. His letter is composed with wondrous skill, brilliant, replenished with reminiscences of the fair vanished world which had been called forth to new life by the Humanists, graceful, and stamped with dignity, and, moreover, rendering a delicate homage to the powerful King,

* The Bishop of Breslau had two years before made his complaint to the papal see regarding the inroads of heresy. "From the neighbouring Meissen, whence the monster in Wittenberg has found an outlet"—so he complained to his chief shepherd—"this accursed sect has invaded my ecclesiastical province also, and that which there appears in books is with me realised in the life" (compare Theiner, ii. 431). Here, too, again and again only the hue and cry over the change of some ecclesiastical customs, neglect of the tithes, the abridgment of ecclesiastical rights, but no entering into the deeper-lying causes—because no comprehension of them—of which the disorders now arising are nothing more than the necessary consequences.

a fragrant blossom of the time of the Renaissance, but with all its well-chosen words powerless to reach and lay bare the ills, and to contribute to their healing.* *Erasmus*, with all his gifts, was not the man for this ; and there is something tragic about the effect of the letter, certainly an undesigned one, which has come to our knowledge—a royal present to the Humanist.† By yet another sign of life, in the same year (1527), *Erasmus* manifested as well his friendly disposition towards the family of *Laski*, as likewise his wish to act with stimulating influence upon the Polish clergy through the medium of the archbishop of the kingdom. He dedicated to the Primate his edition of Ambrose, not only because this particular Father of the Church was ready to issue from the press, but because the Humanist recognised many a trait of resemblance between the first prefect of the Church at Milan and the present primate of Poland, and wished, for the purpose of animating the contemporary Archbishop of Gnesen, to bring before his mind the spiritual picture of the venerable Archbishop of Milan.

Very soon the ecclesiastical relations seem to have wrought with paralysing effect upon our *Laski*. As early as a year after his return to his native land he complains to his friend *Amerbach* that in the province of faith no changes whatever had taken place. All that has been done has been slightly to curtail the great booty of the monks. The senate, namely, had decreed that no monastic property could be divided among private individuals, and that the private property of monks and nuns should

* *Tomiciana*, ix. 180.

† *Erasmus*, p. 895.

after their death revert to their relatives. "Sic forte pauciores monachos habebimus" ("So we shall perhaps have somewhat fewer monks"); with this exclamation the earnest-minded Dean seeks to console himself in his grief over the state of his Church. It was but a dreary consolation. The longer the time that passed, the more did the faithful son become conscious that the mother Church was fixed and immovable in its old ruts, and the scandalised vision was rendered more acute to perceive the failings of this Church. It was in those days that our friend formed in Cracow the acquaintance of a young man preparing for the priesthood, who was then twenty-three years of age, a bachelor of the University, and on the point of completing his studies by a residence of some years in Padua and Bolgna. The gifted and devout young man had already attracted the attention and won the favour of the Bishop of Cracow; nor could the student remain concealed from the searching eye of our *Laski*, since by his serious walk and conversation he towered so prominently above the life and doings of his fellow-students. A Lasco had then indeed no conception that one day there would arise for him, in the young man to whom he now turned with so much kindness, his own most dangerous enemy, and that of the whole Reformational development of Poland: *Stanislas Hosius*. A generation later he recalls to the memory of his opponent those conversations which he held with him in Cracow, in which Laski not only blamed the life of many false servants of his Church (*pseudo-ecclesiastici*), but also was already scandalised at many of their articles of doctrine. At that time there still

existed a friendly interchange of thought between *Hosius* and *Laski* on this point.*

Once *Laski* in his inner life had entered upon these paths and given room to such convictions, the natural result could only be that they drew him ever farther upon by-paths perilous for a faithful son of the Romish Church. He was not in the mood, with his earnest studies, to confine himself now to the practical work of his office ; he must, in accordance with his whole constitution of mind, though at present only from afar, follow the mighty intellectual current without, in the home lands of Humanism and the Reformation. Almost insensibly he was carried away by the surging waves which, though only after long years, landed the earnest man upon the shore of the Evangelical Church. The first letter from him contained in Kuyper's collection is to the well-known *Johannes Hess*, in Breslau, written from Kalisch, the chief town of the palatinate of the same name, to which also Gnesen belonged. The name of *Hess* was a familiar one to the Humanists and Reformers in Germany and Switzerland. His renowned theses of the year 1524, on the word of God, the high-priestly office of Christ, and on marriage, breathe a fresh Reformation spirit ; they penetrated deep into France ; and *Lefèvre* testifies in a charming letter to *Farel* from Meaux his warm assent to their contents.† It would appear that *Laski* during his stay in Basle heard nothing concerning this Nuremberger, for whom Poland had

* So I understand the statement, "nec raro mecum sermones suas ea de re miscebat" (Kuyper, i. 396).

† The letter, printed for the first time, in Herminjard (i. 219), at the close of it also the theses.

become a second fatherland ; but in Poland itself men spoke much in liberal circles of the renowned Breslau doctor, and so our *Laski* turned to him, animated at first by the wish of coming into intellectual contact with the fresh and lively scholar,* but then also through him to become possessed of the most recent products of the book-market. For the Dean of Gnesen the stern inhibition of books does not seem to have existed, so far as concerns the importation of Lutheran writings. He has at that time already read the *Hyperaspistes*† of Erasmus against Luther ; he wishes to obtain all the writings which have since then proceeded from the pen of *Erasmus* or of *Luther*. The *Hyperaspistes* had made its appearance just at the time when our *Laski* set out from Venice ; in it the final and irreparable breach between the head of the Reformation and the prince of the Humanists is accomplished. So great is the bitterness and irritation of *Erasmus*, ordinarily so refined in language, so calm and lofty in tone, that, even as regards the form, he exposed himself to a perceptible weakening by the surrender of the wonted moderation in which his strength lay. In point of contents, too, the Humanist occupies a lower standpoint than the Reformer, in presence of the deepest and most mysterious question of life, that of the freedom or unfreedom of the human will. There the Humanist, with his weapons drawn avowedly from the armoury of Church doctrine, but it is nevertheless rather *Pelagius* than *Augustine*

* Zwingli, in a letter to Vadian, describes him (Hess) as “homo terus sane et alacer” (*Zwingli*, vii. 342).

† The full title is *Hyperaspistes Diatribes* (1526), a defence of his *Diatribé de Libero Arbitrio* (published 1524) against Luther’s reply *De Servo Arbitrio* (1525).—TR.

who is there suffered to speak ; here the monk and hero, who has taken up the giant conflict against Rome, and for whom buckler and sword is the word of God alone. *Calvin* has in after-days hardly laid such decided stress upon the unfreedom of the human will, as *Luther* in his controversial writing.

Many, and those even earnest-minded believers, will not be able to follow the colossal man in all his most daring conclusions ; and *Erasmus* by his sharp, unsparing rhetoric would easily win for himself the approbation of those whose so-called sound common sense prefers to evade the serious, difficult questions with a convenient dictatorial utterance, rather than make the attempt to sound their depths, much less to think of their solution. *Dorner* is thus right in his verdict on this controversy when he says : " Erasmus makes man, to begin with, richer than Luther ; but how much superior in the long run is Luther's notion of freedom to that of Erasmus, for whom the highest and best in the same is resolved into freedom of choice, who thus, as a logical consequence, must teach an everlasting possibility of falling. Luther's notion of freedom leads to the Godlike real freedom of grace ; for this it could not appear a privilege, but only a defect, to be still involved in choice and hesitancy. Here, too, as in the Christology, it is the *goal* of the yet to be perfectly realised idea which Luther has apprehended, though he has been less successful in completely and distinctly marking out the stages to the attainment of the goal and the factors entering into such attainment. Erasmus' notion of freedom, with its everlasting twofold possibility, and with its uncertainty in regard to salvation, can-

not appear to him an enviable one; nor can he perceive a loss in that condition in which man, through the power of God-given love, even as God by virtue of His own free eternal love, can eventually *will* only the good."*

In addition to the second part of the above-mentioned work, which appeared in the course of the following year, *Hess* had yet many other writings to send to our *Laski*, in accordance with his request; for with the most strained attention the circles of the Humanists and the adherents of the Reformation followed the decisive conflict of the two leaders, and from the opposite camps resounded now one cry, now the other. The biographer of Erasmus points to a few isolated expressions of those who had been repelled by the assertions of Luther from a contemplated adhesion to the cause of the Reformation;† the final issue, however, shows us not *Luther* driven into a corner, but the Humanist retiring in vexation from Basle to Freiburg, and thereby abandoning the field of battle.

If we had only an expression of our *Laski* showing us what was the effect of this feud upon him in those days!

But no sound from his mouth. One thing only has become manifest for us: that a slight cooling of the relations between *Erasmus* and *Laski* must have already set in towards the close of the twentieth years of the century (1527—1529). Long

* Dorner, *Geschichte der Prot. Theologie* (Munich, 1867), p. 209. Feugère (p. 274), as a Catholic, attacks the statement of this German Protestant, as well as that of Stichart *Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Leipsic, 1870, p. 368), who has appealed thereto, but, as it seems to us, with no valid arguments.

† Feugère, *Erasme* (Paris, 1874), p. 273.

separation, no doubt, causes many an epistolary correspondence to languish. With ever longer intervals is the correspondence now pursued which was at one time so warmly and zealously maintained between the master and his scholar. That is not the striking part; it is more significant that *Erasmus* in his numerous letters to Poland ever more rarely sends greetings to his once so heartily esteemed comrade. Nay, in the somewhat boastful epistle of the elderly *Erasmus*, from his place of retreat at Freiburg, in the year 1530, in which he speaks of his friends and acquaintances in Poland, there is not one word of *Laski*.* Was it the political attitude of *Laski*, the partisan of Zapolya, which imposed silence upon the timid man out of consideration for the Emperor? or had the difference of religious sentiment brought about a tension?

Another cursory notice affords us the opportunity of observing our *Laski* in his lonely studies. He had prayed his friend *Amerbach* to forward him the lucubrations of *Sadolet* (1527).† We shall certainly not err if we think of *Laski* in those days as being at the standpoint of the upright, prudent, and able Bishop of Carpentras, in the duchy of Avignon. *Sadolet*, already in early years—at the time when *Laski* as a boy was staying with his uncle in Rome—appointed, along with *Peter Bembo*, secretary to *Leo X.*, had, without immediately participating in the feud between *Luther* and *Erasmus*, sought on this important question to preserve an intermediate position between the two combatants;

* *Erasmus*, p. 1383.

† *Gabbema, Epistolarum Centuriae Tres* (Harlingæ, 1663), p. 7.

he conceded more to Divine grace than *Erasmus* was willing to do, declared himself in favour of the doctrine of justification by faith,* and kept up a friendly interchange of letters with men of the Reformation, such as *Bucer*, *Sturm*, *Melanchthon*. He adhered faithfully to his Church, sought to preserve his diocese free from all contact with Protestantism; to a persecution of the Protestants, however, he would not suffer himself to be led away, but would much rather apply the hand kindly and gently to remove the crying evils in the mother Church. We can well suppose that his writings, in the case of minds having such elective affinity, served as a bridge for the establishing of a spiritual converse with the men and the doctrine of the Reformation, however decided the protest which the Bishop himself would have raised against such effect. Was our *Laski* perhaps entering upon this bridge when he applied to his friend in Basle for the books?

3. THE SEVERANCE FROM CHURCH AND FATHER-LAND.

So passed the years for our *Laski* in his native land, storm-tossed without when the fate of his relatives called him to take part in the events of the world, but also storm-tossed in mind, because he inwardly shared in the conflict of spirits of that time, because his soul entered into the questions raised by the Reformation, and raised with a force and distinctness which demanded of a pious heart

* Herzog, xiii. 299.

answer and solution, and because on a glance at the Church of his native land he must see how its ministers lived on without the understanding of these questions, without deeper interest, ready, indeed, to proceed with the constable against all freer movement, but disinclined in earnest repentance to begin in their own lives the healing of the gaping wounds of the Church.

In the midst of this movement there fell a severe visitation. The last years of the uncle's life were saddened in manifold ways. He had more than once to make a bitter experience of the hostile spirit of his powerful and closely combined opponents. He saw the mysterious shadow of the Reformation fall, too, within the bounds of his own spiritual jurisdiction ; but he no longer knew how to explain the varying outlines, and had a conception only of the great peril with which the Church, entrusted to his oversight, was threatened by this movement. Still more heavily did the course of events in Hungary press upon the aged man. His heart was with the nephew upon the side of *Zapolya*, and, with the ardour of Polish patriotism, he allowed his words and his means to be drawn with his heart into the support of the brother-in-law of his king. Even a heavy loss in earthly possessions the failing man might be able to overcome ; more distressing, however, was it to him to see that even this his bearing towards *Zapolya*, of which he could hardly be said to make any secret, and in which he was conscious of being in harmony with the most eminent men of Poland, was turned to account by his never-resting detractors in order to render him suspected at Rome. The labour does not seem to have been in vain.

We are told that Pope *Clement VII.* placed the Archbishop and his family under the ban. The Cardinal of Ancona is said to have summoned the *legatus natus* to Rome to answer in his own defence, and that in a citation so boundlessly violent that he designated *Laski* therein as "only in name archbishop, in reality arch-devil, standing on one level with Datan, Korym, Abyron, Judas." While the letter branded the nephew *Jerome* as a second Herodotus, the Cardinal did not shrink from the charge that the Primate had acquired arms by means of the sum obtained from the alienation of ecclesiastical properties, and that these had been sent to the Turks in Hungary.

The shameful document itself I have not been able to find anywhere, and on several weighty grounds doubt its existence. But the fact that such a rumour should be able at all to attach to the name of *Laski* at a very early period reflects the disposition of the opponents, which he had still to experience himself, and which shed a gloom over the late evening of his life. In February, 1530, he officiated at the coronation of the son of his king, at that time a youth of ten years ; afterwards he still held a synod in Petrikow, none of which he could have done if he had been placed under a ban. On the 19th of May, 1531, he fell asleep, now seventy-five years of age and weary of life, in his castle at Kalisch.

Only our *Johannes* seems to have been present at his deathbed. *Stanislas* had already returned from France to Poland in 1527 ; his occupation in life, however, detained him for the most part far from the uncle. *Jerome* was still in Hungary ; at the intelligence of the death he hastened to his native country.

By the end of June the brothers met in Cracow at a sort of family council. The testament of the uncle had been continued up to within a few days of his decease : they were called to carry into effect the very minute instructions, which afford also to us an extremely interesting glimpse into the sumptuous style of housekeeping of a Polish archbishop of the sixteenth century ; at the same time they had on this occasion to arrange and divide their father's property. *Johannes* had already a few years before, immediately after the death of the father, voluntarily renounced his portion of the inheritance in favour of his brothers. *Jerome*, as the eldest, received the ancestral castle in Lask, the youngest brother a few other possessions, among which the principal was the township of Strykon, with all its outlying lands and villages. The brothers could not remain together long. *Jerome* repaired from Cracow direct to Linz, in order to treat with *Sigismund of Herberstein*, the ambassador of Ferdinand, with regard to the projects of compensation and exchange to be made with *John Zapolya*. These negotiations, together with all the mental strains of the past months, exerted so wearing an effect upon *Jerome Laski*, that he had hardly returned to Transylvania, when he fell into a severe and dangerous illness, which prostrated him for seven weeks upon the bed of pain. Nor was this the whole of his troubles. While he was still mourning over the loss of the uncle, a son and a daughter were carried off in rapid succession, and, so far as we can learn from the letters preserved to us from that time, it does not appear that either of the brothers was able to tend him.*

* Bucholtz, *Urkundenbuch*, p. 48; but there is an inextricable

The departure of the Archbishop affected the destiny of our *Johannes* most of all. By the uncle's death he had been deprived of his strongest support for the ascending of the high ladder of ecclesiastical dignities. Shortly before his decease the uncle had, with friendly concern, obtained for him the appointment as Provost of Gnesen and Leczyc. Now, however, he took his place as the nephew and namesake of the deceased Archbishop, and thus also in part as heir to the hostile sentiment which was cherished on so many sides towards the departed. Men could now with impunity vent upon him their rancour at his having been so long by preference the object of a too paternal solicitude on the part of the mighty Primate. We do not hear that such interruption on the path of rapid advancement had the effect of causing the bereaved nephew to despond ; his earnest purpose of mind imposed upon him other and higher tasks, and in the accomplishment of these the ill-will of the envious could not disturb him. His grief over the Church had long drawn its nourishment from other and very different sources than the pitiful laughter of ungratified ambition. With the departure of the venerable form, however, the bond was loosened which with a heartfelt filial affection attached the nephew to the uncle who had manifested such faithful paternal love, which, moreover, attached the Dean to his archbishop ; he could now unhindered follow the guidance of those thoughts which led him ever more deeply into the

confusion in the dates on p. 48 (Wysko, 31st October, 1531) and p. 49 (Vienna, 2nd November, 1531).

word of God, and ever farther from the ordinances of his Church.

The change was not quickly accomplished. We are glad on *Laski's* account that a few years yet elapsed before the completed rupture, since in this way the reproach brought against him by his defamers is deprived of its force—that from the days of his stay in Basle he had, as a sort of disguised apostate, hypocritically preserved the semblance of attachment to the Romish Church so long as the high position of his uncle afforded him the prospect of an equally high succession. It was not the case that the disappointment of this hope, with which he is credited, impelled him in vexation to burn the ships behind him. He was still fighting a giant's fight to be able to remain in his mother Church ; he fought it faithfully, earnestly, with the feeling of sadness that it was a contest also involving his fatherland, his beloved Poland, but ever more also with the impression, with the dawning conviction, that the wrestling mysterious form in the night was the Lord Himself, and from that moment with the imploring wish, "Lord, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." As the blessed of the Lord, then, at the dawn of the morning, he had no utterance of complaint that the sinew of the thigh was thus shrunken.

In the first place, the death of the Archbishop brought about for the young Provost of Gnesen a series of official labours, even before his domestic affairs had been arranged with his brothers. The cathedral chapter of Gnesen deputed him to convey to the Bishop of Cujavia, *Matthias Drzewicki*, the intelligence of the election of the last-named to the

archbishopric.* He availed himself of the opportunity for coming to an arrangement with the successor in office as to the revenues from the archbishopric due to the heirs of the Primate in accordance with the terms of the testament. These negotiations may not have been altogether easy. The Bishop of Cujavia was among the opponents of the departed Archbishop. In the expostulation which the heads of the opposite party once (1527) presented to the Queen *Bona*,† begging her support against *Laski*, we find the name of *Drzewicki*. The difficult negotiations, however, found a peaceful conclusion. It seems on the whole that the new Archbishop did not transfer his old rancour to the nephew, and that the ability of the latter was such as to win for him recognition and esteem even after he had been deprived of the more than paternal support of the Primate. Almost seven years after the death of his uncle the office of archdeacon of Warsaw was conferred upon him (21st March, 1538);‡ the right of presenting to this important post had been obtained of the King by *Laski* before his death on behalf of the Archbishop of Gnesen for the time being, to the great annoyance of Queen *Bona*, who promised to take good care that during her lifetime he should carry out no more of his devices with the King.§ Thus the intriguing Queen intermeddled with feminine hand in the ecclesiastical questions; thus rose and

* The papal ratification of the election in Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta*, ii., p. 478.

† Compare Zeissberg, *Johannes Laski und sein Testament*, p. 588.

‡ *Acta Capit. Gnesn. et Posn. Lib. Install.*, i. 49.

§ Zeissberg, p. 589.

fell at court the designing game of envious prelates ; and all this while the fire of the Reformation around was now blazing high, and there was urgent need of laying aside all domestic contention and turning the combined strength against the opponents, from day to day growing more numerous. The dignity of an archdeacon of Warsaw, which the uncle had certainly intended for his nephew when he acquired the patronage, was the last distinction which the Romish Church bestowed upon this her gifted, but already half-recreant son.

Exceedingly sparse as are the data from that momentous time, we shall not be wrong in supposing our friend had then already advanced by one foot beyond the tent of his mother Church. As early as 1536 the rumour was current that *Laski* had quitted his native land and repaired to *Luther* and *Melanchthon* at Wittenberg. The report turned out to be false, but it shows what was thought likely to be true with regard to him in Cracow, whence the intelligence comes. There is still extant an interesting letter bearing on this rumour.* The letter, addressed to *Laski* by a certain Andreas Fr., under which abbreviation I am inclined to recognise the Polish statesman *Andreas Fricius Modrzewski*—a man of some literary note, and subsequently a member of the Protestant Church, whom we shall meet with once or twice in the after-history—treats the report, made known by *Sbigneus* in Cracow, as nothing at all improbable or even surprising. We discover from this letter how the change on the part of *Laski* then appeared to his friends a matter for

* Gabbema, *Epistolarum Centuriae Tres*, p. 19.

discussion. There had already been gathered by this time at Cracow a little band of kindred spirits (among whom at the close of our narrative we shall seek admission) who raised bitter complaints—the letter itself affords evidence enough of this—concerning the condition of the State and the Church, and who had a secret sympathy with the progress of the Reformation, as with its leaders. It is true, the visiting of Wittenberg had been interdicted a year before by a very stern edict of the King ; but that such measure should have become necessary shows in what great numbers Polish students had already repaired to this stronghold of heresy ; and, as man is constituted, we know that even the severest edicts of this nature avail but little, as they availed but little then.

Modrzewski, in that letter, gives us a detailed report of the diets of the Wittenberg Concord (Sunday, 21st, to Monday, 29th May, 1536). That which was effected by *Bucer* and his men of Upper Germany in their negotiations with *Luther* during this week was entirely after the mind of our *Laski* in subsequent times ; and it is like a fair prediction when rumour speaks of him as already in those very days present at Wittenberg. Never did the German Reformer hold out so conciliatory a hand to the people of Strassburg, Augsburg, and the other towns of Upper Germany, as on that 23rd of May, when “his eyes and face beamed in elate, joyful, and kindly mood ;”* he will not contend with the people who do not admit that the ungodly partake in the Supper of the body of the Lord.

* Köstlin, *Martin Luther* (Elberfeld, 1875), ii., p. 342.

The diversity of views was not inwardly overcome, but in that one hour *Luther* was able to extend the brotherly hand above and beyond this diversity. Many freer views with regard to the Supper than were admitted here had *Laski* already heard expressed by *Erasmus* twelve years before, only orally, indeed, at the symposium with a little chosen company. From the nature of the description given by *Modrzewski* it is clear that our *Laski* had remained no stranger to the development of the doctrine of the Supper since those days.

Not as early as 1536 was the breach with the mother Church completed.* Two years later, soon after he had been made Archdeacon of Warsaw, he quitted his native land—to our eyes, suddenly—and that with the definite intention of thereby separating himself at the same time from the Romish Church. But he did not take this important step in secret, like a fugitive. His high position in life, socially as well as ecclesiastically, had often brought him into intimate contact with the King; and *Sigismund* remained to the last well-disposed towards the earnest and influential man, as witness *Laski's* appointment to the archdeaconship as late as 1538; and to this we must add the further brilliant testimony, that the King in the same year offered him likewise the vacant bishopric of Cujavia. The fact

* Notwithstanding the explicit statement of Utenhove—*Simplex et Fidelis Narratio* (Bas., 1560), p. 234—"Porro Joannes a Lasco 1556 tandem in patriam revocatur, unde *viginti amplius annos* nomine religionis sponte sua jam exulaverat," I doubt the correctness of the date assigned, since *Laski* could not possibly have been appointed Archdeacon of Warsaw two years after such manifest forsaking of the Church of his native land. We must not accept without examination such notes of time coming from those days.

indeed is not to be reasoned away ; the friend who delivered the funeral oration over his grave two-and-twenty years later attests it aloud in the presence of those who were in a position to have raised objection to his statement.* So soon as *Laski* had received any tidings of this intention, he went to the King and candidly explained to him the reasons which compelled him to decline such favour. Ambition had no attractions for him, certainly in any case not any longer ; on the eve of his departure the episcopal dignity no longer captivated him ; the cross of Christ and the reproach and persecution of an evangelical preacher seemed to him more desirable. It reflects honour on the King that he knew how to appreciate such plain statements, and forgot or overlooked all his severe measures in presence of the greatness of a mind which preferred poverty for Christ's sake to the luxurious life of a bishop. The King knew that he had not many such men in his land. He did not refuse to this rare phenomenon of a man the right of travelling abroad ; nay, he graciously provided *Laski* with letters of recommendation to the princes of other lands. To the end of his life *Sigismund* could not forget this man.†

It may well thus have been a sad leave-taking as our friend, standing on that frontier which borders on Germany, bade a last farewell to the land of his fathers, and cast one more lingering glance upon that country which he loved with all the fiery ardour of a Pole, and from which he now tore

* Statorius, *Funebris Oratio in obitum Johannis a Lasco* (Pinczoviæ, 1560), p. 6.

† See the letter of *Laski* to the young King, Kuyper, ii., p. 30.

himself, perhaps never to see it again. Another step, and the momentous die is cast. And he took that step in obedience to the Divine voice within his heart, in which he soon already rejoices as being the grace of God. It has commanded him, as once the father of the faithful, to depart out of his country, and from his kindred, and from his father's house, away into a yet unknown distance, of which he only knew that it would be the land which his God purposed to show him. God has indeed demanded of many, in those hero-days of the Reformation, the same heavy sacrifice ; and the host of the exiles in Geneva, in Zurich, and in so many another hospitable hearth of the Reformation, who at home in high position passed their days of ease, and now ate the bread of indigence in a strange land, testifies that they willingly presented that sacrifice for the sacred treasure of their faith, and praised their Lord on account of it. But yet among the hosts of hero-forms there are not many who had, at their Lord's command, to tear themselves from such seductive embraces as our Pole there on the frontier of his fatherland. Yet long after there resounds in his letters the note of that which he had then to surrender, not indeed in the melancholy tone of an exile who longs for the forsaken scenes of home, but rather in the jubilant tone of one who is conscious of having passed through such a sacrifice into the liberty of the children of God. Thus six years afterwards he describes that time to *Bullinger*,—his companion in the faith,—in the beautiful words : “ In brief, to make known to thee also the benefit and kindness of the Lord towards me, I was once a Pharisee of repute, adorned with many titles and

dignities, splendidly endowed with many and rich benefices from the days of my boyhood ; but now, after I have voluntarily left all this behind through the grace of God, after I have given up my country and my friends, because I saw that I could not live in the midst of them according to Christ's mind and spirit, now I am in a strange land only a poor servant of my poor Lord Christ, crucified for me, lately here [in Friesland] minister of the Church, to make known the doctrine of the Gospel, after the will of Him who, of His compassion, has called me out of the net of the Pharisees into His flock."* To another Swiss friend he speaks about the same time of the decisive step, in this wise : "In a miserable way I had spent and wasted all my time in running about in the disquiet of martial din, in the commotions of the court. But the gracious God has restored me to myself again, and called me out of the midst of Pharisaism in a wondrous manner to the true knowledge of Himself ; to Him be the glory for ever. Amen. Thus now restored to myself by God's grace, I venture, according to my little ability, to serve that Church of Christ which once, in my Pharisaism and ignorance, I hated, and pray God He will, in His mercy, not despise my humble mite beside the brilliant gifts of others, after the example of the widow in the Gospel, but will vouchsafe to make use of it for the edification of His Church."†

Thus did our friend, too, as all his predecessors, as all his successors upon the same trying path in the name of God, never experience a regret, never a pang on account of such leading of his Lord. On

* Kuyper, ii. 569.

† *Ibid.*, p. 583.

the contrary, he, as all those other heroes, was privileged to learn the truth of his Master's words, "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

II.

*JOHN A LASCO AS A PROTESTANT IN
GERMANY AND ENGLAND.*



VII

ON THE PILGRIMAGE.

IT may have been at the end of the summer in the year 1538 that *John a Lasco* crossed the frontiers of his native land and entered upon German soil. It was not merely a quitting of the fatherland and a going forth into a strange territory, but much more,—a forsaking of the ancient Church, a dissolving of the most intimate family ties, and a journeying into the hazy distance to which the Divine voice powerfully and irresistibly called him, the voice which will yet make known to him the unknown land of his dwelling. Our pilgrim there upon the Polish frontier stood in the full strength of his prime ; soon he will have passed out of his fourth decennium, a fine, well-formed son of his fatherland, with lofty brow, great, open eyes, sharply cut nose, about the closed mouth the expression of an inflexibly firm will, the whole vigorous outward appearance full of nobility,—an attractive, earnest type of manhood. Those who had first seen him in those great days commend in that manly form the serious dignity expressed in the countenance, combined with a trait of amiable grace, as also the whole majesty of the bearing, which at once proclaimed a hero.*

* Gerdes, *Introductio in Hist. Evangel. Saec. XVI. Renovati* (Groningæ, 1744), iii., p. 83.

His spirit's eye found the land of the Reformation essentially altered since those days,—now, indeed, already separated by an interval of twelve years—in which upon the border territory he had looked forth from the quiet room in the house of *Erasmus* upon the rising tide of the Reformation. At that time the whole movement was in full fermentation, and only the seething foam lay before the gate of the great Humanist in Basle. *Erasmus* had just entered upon his decision-fraught passage of arms with *Luther*; for the companion of the leader of the Humanists, in those days universally recognised as such, it might still appear doubtful whether the Reformer so sturdily hacking away would come out eventually conqueror; and upon that victory depended the existence of the Church. The mighty on-rolling spirit of the Reformation, springing from the heart, and now also laying hold of the whole popular soul in its depths, had set free likewise other long, long-pent-up forces; and these now broke for themselves their stormy channel and called inexorably for solution, even on the part of the Reformation; and yet their source lay far away in another domain. It was still very uncertain what would be the issue, and whether the Reformation would succeed in holding itself aloof from the various heterogeneous demands, and in separating from itself the impetuous allies who, with bold Radicalism, forsook even the ground of the Gospel to enter upon a path of their own choosing.

The relations had in the meantime become essentially simplified. Easily and decidedly had emerged from the conflict of opposing elements the clearly outlined form of that which was then known

as the Reformed Church. One saw upon its face the traces of the arduous conflict in which it had fought out its fights, and at the same time the holy, joyful enthusiasm with which that conflict for the Gospel inspires the confessor. The youthful Church of the Reformation, in lofty consciousness of this its Divine right, could now more calmly derive the consequences of its victory. In the Retscher* at Spires in 1529 it entered its protest against the decision of the Imperial Diet. Its adherents had now become Protestants, counterpart, indeed, but also coequal part, to the Romish Church. A year later the youthful combatant had already presented to the Imperial Assembly at Augsburg, to the Kaiser and the empire, her confession, as yet somewhat strongly emphasising the agreement with the old mother Church, not yet bringing rather into bold relief the clearly manifest differences. But this was perhaps the more prudent course ; the adversary did not feel called upon, as some Hotspurs wished, to dip his pen in blood ; his deplorable writing in ink served, on the other hand, only to raise the courage of the young heroes. Again, a year afterwards, we see the Protestant States combine more closely for mutual defence and succour in the *League of Smalcalden* (March, 1531) ; they were manly, able. princes whom this league selected as its leaders. The Emperor and his people had henceforth to reckon with this league ; and the Religious Peace at

* A palace, now in ruins, situated near the cathedral. It is famous on account of the "protestation" made (April 19th) by the five German princes—Saxony, Brandenburg, Brunswick, Hesse, and Anhalt—and delivered in writing, 20th April, 1529, from which, as is known, the Church of the Reformation received the name of "Protestant."—TR.

Nuremberg in 1532 shows that *Charles V.* had made up his mind for such reckoning. Both parties therein pledged themselves to peace until the settlement of the whole matter at a council presently to be summoned. The Protestants had already become so strong in those days, that, in the opinion of the best judges, they might have wrested much more important concessions from the Emperor, then pressed as he was on many sides. The deeply religious character of the German Reformation restrained them for the most part from winning for themselves the more favourable political position.

But the violent political movements, which threatened to draw all the lands of Europe into a vortex, advanced in an unexpected manner the firm establishment of the Church, reformed in accordance with God's Word. We have already once stood at the spot where this whirlpool threw up its angriest waves. Upon the wide, fruitful plains of Hungary it seemed for a moment as though the fate of Europe was to be decided for centuries in the bloody conflict of the two pretenders to the crown there,—a conflict which, on the one hand, brought the victorious *Soliman*, with his bloodthirsty hordes, under the very walls of Vienna (October, 1529), which, on the other hand, seemed to bring to an issue the hostile politics of *Charles V.* and *Francis I.* and those who rallied around them in the varying fortune of arms. Kaiser *Charles* did not venture, considering the serious turn of military affairs, to drive the German Protestant States into the camp of his enemies, and had therefore to tolerate very many things on their part which he would assuredly under other circumstances have suppressed with

fire and sword. King *Francis*, himself a Catholic, and not willing to afford any support to the Protestant movement in his kingdom, sued for the goodwill of the Protestant princes, with the ulterior object of an alliance in arms. He failed indeed in his endeavour ; but the advantage of this political current accrued to the Protestants in those years.

The political events upon the stage of the world in this fourth decade had been nothing but favourable to Protestantism in its national position. The hindrance in the way of attaining the full result within its reach arose, in a manner ruinous to all subsequent development, out of its own midst. The Convention at Marburg (beginning of October, 1529) had clearly shown the dissimilar mental tendency of the two heads of the movement, *Luther* and *Zwingli*, upon one decisive point. The shadows of these two forms rested thenceforth upon the hosts which followed their leading, and gave to them differing outlines. The merit of having maintained their personal conviction must be acknowledged to both alike. The greater and more hearty sympathy must be accorded to the action of that leader who, reaching over the irreconcilable point of difference, extends the brotherly hand to the German Reformer, and has with tears to see it repelled. How unspeakably much sorrow has since then come upon the Evangelical Church, which saw in the rejection of the proffered hand discord carried into its own bosom.* “*You have another spirit than we!*” That fatal, lamentable utterance became a sort of watchword, which divided the allies into two camps, between

* An account of this conference in Abr. Scultetus, *Annales Evangel.* (Heidelb., 1620), pp. 187 seqq.—TR.

which the common adversary then skilfully drove in his most dangerous wedge. It is true, there was felt on the one side and the other the need rather of filling up the slight division, than of widening it, in order not themselves to work into the hands of the Romish Church by their own discord. This feeling was more lively in the towns of Upper Germany and in the Swiss cantons ; with the others the feeling of being on their guard against mingling with this supposed "other spirit" continued to predominate. But *Luther*, too, saw the necessity for an approximation, and overcame for a time his scruples regarding all contact with the Sacramentarians. *Bucer*, indefatigably active to this end, found at Wittenberg an essential support for his praiseworthy endeavours in the person of *Melanchthon*; *Luther* looked on in silence, and allowed the matter to take its course ; nay—we have already spoken of the fact that *Laski* was thought to be in Germany on that eventful day, which for a moment seemed to have called into existence that which afterwards became the most zealous task of our friend's life—on the 29th May, 1536, a sort of union was established, and subscribed to by *Luther* also in the *Wittenberg Concord*. What joy was called forth by this step, and the letter of *Luther* further accompanying it, in Switzerland, in all Upper Germany ! Zurich despatched to Wittenberg a magistrate's courier in the Zurich colours and badges during the summer of 1538 with a letter from the noble *Bullinger* relating to this matter. The letter concludes with the beautiful words : "God, our heavenly Father, who is the Lord of hosts, the Father of all mercy and of all consolation, kindle in us on both sides the fire of

His Divine love, that we may happily preserve the Christian work of this concord, to the hallowing and honour of His holy name, and to the blessedness of many souls, which has been brought about by the grace of God in opposition to Satan, the world, and all their adherents."

About this time *Laski* entered the home-land of the Reformation. It was as though in the ordering of his life's course the moment had been waited for in which just the personality could enter upon the theatre of action which in the whole endowment of natural gifts seemed to be the chosen instrument for further labouring on the edifice of the Reformation upon the basis of this concord. But yet God's ways are not our ways. The stranger, who had turned his back upon Poland and the Romish Church, was led to his work only by long circuitous paths.

Laski directed his steps, in the first place, not to Wittenberg, where the friend had two years before conjectured him to be. He seems purposely to have shunned the presence of the great Reformer, whether it was that the conception of *Luther* once formed in the vicinity of *Erasmus* had not yet entirely vanished, or that he had given the promise to his king, who had allowed the highly distinguished son of his country to depart, that he would avoid immediate intercourse with this most redoubtable heretic. But neither did he, in the first instance, enter upon the way of personal contact with the Reformers of the other line. In Switzerland he might quickly have renewed the old connections. The intrepid *Zwingli* indeed had already fallen upon the bloody field, a valiant Swiss; *Oecolampadius* too,

the brave Reformer in Basle, had been called away by his Lord and Master out of the militant Church into the Church triumphant. But *Pellican* yet stood faithful and firm on the watch there on the Rhine ; and Basle, once as much endeared to our friend as is his *alma mater* to a student, had entered without much conflict, with calm, measured pace, upon the path of the Reformation ; while Zurich enjoyed the labours of *Bullinger*, the man of so intimate spiritual companionship with *Laski* in after-years. Further to the south, on the charming shore of the Lake of Geneva, there was working indefatigably, and in the power of an Old Testament prophet, *William Farel*, with whom our Pole had once become acquainted as a fugitive in Basle ; beside him, however, was also his master *Calvin* already labouring—both heroes lately expelled from Geneva, because they were too great and stern for the people, who would there enjoy a life devoted to external amusements, both unquelled, for they had experienced this their fate in the faithful service of their Lord. *Farel* had already taken his stand again, with the same uncompromising severity, the same fiery ardour of love, upon the other side of the lake, in the zealous endeavour to sanctify to God the walk of the Christians in Neufchatel. *Calvin* had gone farther : in Strassburg he had found a pulpit wherein to proclaim the Gospel. What an impression would he have made upon the exile from Poland ! And, besides these, so many another towering form would have fascinated our *Laski* in the fair German imperial city of those days, kindred spirits, who would soon have stamped upon his thought and labour their characteristic and peculiar

mark, not essentially different from the impress eventually borne by himself.

We are unfortunately ignorant of the motives which led our friend to strike out another path. At the first glance the way seems like a play of chance, the drifting of a shipwrecked mariner at the sport of the waves ; with a deeper penetration, we recognise the leading of the Lord, who guides the destinies of men as the streams of water. First, we see the form of our wanderer emerging at Frankfort-on-the-Main, somewhere about the time when, in the latter autumn, the master-printers were wont to assemble from all parts, with their new stores of books, to the fair in the then so important commercial town. Even from Cracow, from Thorn, Posen, and Breslau, the people repaired to the Main, generally in intimate association, in order the more easily to obtain protection for themselves and their wares upon the insecure highways. He took up his quarters at the house of a certain *Hadrianus*, who is said to have been a bookseller on the Liebfrauenberg, and who in after-years effected for him the purchase of books and performed other commissions, by birth a Netherlander, but naturalised as a citizen of Frankfort.* Perhaps it was just the book fair which attracted the Pole to the city of the Main. For certainly not every fresh contribution to the literature of the Reformation was able to pass the jealously guarded frontier of his own land ; and such a fair afforded the most favourable opportunity for enjoying one or other fruit forbidden and perforce dispensed with at

* *Frankfurtische Religionshandlungen* (Frankfort, 1726), ii., Supplement, p. 50.

home, as also of becoming acquainted with the present position of spiritual affairs. Whether or not *Laski*, on this his first sojourn in Frankfort, encountered any of the leading celebrities, we are not informed by the well-kept records of the town. The free imperial city, its vigorous sons full of a lively sense of independence, had for the greater part attached itself to the Reformation, at that time still with a marked preference for the type emanating from *Zwingli* and the Upper German towns. *Laski* formed an acquaintance with a stranger within the walls of the city, which ripened into an intimate bond of friendship—a bond which in some respects determined the whole after-course of his life. *Albert Hardenberg*, a native of the Netherlands, had fallen dangerously ill with an obstinate fever while he was on his way to Italy. *Hardenberg* happened to be entertained at the same lodgings as our friend. Some ten years younger than *Laski*, and not very distantly related to Pope *Hadrian*, he had as a boy entered the renowned Brothers' house at Groningen, called into life and endowed with an abiding reputation by the noble, gifted *John Wessel*; grown up to be a serious young man, he exchanged the pious Brothers' house for the adjacent Bernardin convent at Aduard. His teacher, *Goswin van Halen*, had indeed advised him to enter that convent in which men like *Rudolph Agricola*, *John Wessel*, and others had once laboured, and regarding which he had himself said, "If formerly you sought a learned man in Friesland, you would find him either in Aduard or nowhere."*

* Spiegel, *Albert Rizäus Hardenberg* (Bremen, 1869), p. II.

At the age of twenty, *Hardenberg*, arrayed in the white cowl, with the black scapulary of the Bernardins, repaired to Louvain, to complete the eight years' course of a theologian preparatory to the bachelor's degree. He had become an object of suspicion to the professors of a narrow creed on account of his more liberal conceptions, and he had the intention at the time of the autumn fair of 1538 to travel by way of Frankfort to Italy. The obstinate attack of sickness compelled him to change his plan. Instead of journeying to Italy he repaired to Mayence, to acquire at the university of that city the highest dignity of his vocation, the honour of the doctor's diploma. The new-found friend accompanied him to the neighbouring city, which in those days had received, chiefly on account of the renown of its university, the distinguishing appellation of "the golden Mayence."

Just at that time, days of noisy excitement and turbulence prevailed in Mayence. After a wilful absence of years, the Elector *Albert* of Mayence had at length been compelled to yield to the ever more impetuous urgency of his people, and had come from Halle into his cathedral city. From February to June, 1539,* he held his court in Mayence, not as a spiritual shepherd, who cares for the soul's welfare of the flock entrusted to him, rather as a secular prince, in whose veins flows the blood of the Hohenzollern, zealously occupied with the raising of mercenaries and exercising them for speedy service. If the oft-recurring assertion is correct, that *Laski* was provided at his departure with letters of recom-

* May, *Kurfürst Albrecht von Mainz* (Munich, 1875), ii., p. 331.

mendation from his king, there was assuredly among them one to the King's relative, the Elector and Cardinal, in whose hand the ultimate destiny of Germany would have lain more than once if the moral earnestness, the religious depth of his character had corresponded to his influence. At that time the pleasure-seeking ecclesiastical prince could no longer afford any guidance to our *Laski*, even though the latter had at all approached him. A quarter of a century earlier perhaps it would have been otherwise. That was the brilliant period in which the studious and art-loving prince was the friend of *Hutten*, and still bowed with heartfelt reverence and devotion before the kingly intellect of *Erasmus*. At that time the distinguished ecclesiastical prince was animated by the ardent desire of transforming his university of Mayence into a model school for the studies of Humanism, and at the same time also, quite in the spirit of the great German Humanist, of exerting a reforming influence upon the Church. Humanism proved even in his powerful hands inadequate to accomplish so great a work. Moreover, there was wanting to this its enthusiastic disciple the sacred moral earnestness for caring for the salvation of one's own soul ; he too failed of the realisation of his purpose, because he forgot that the sanctuary can be cleansed not with merely learned or humanitarian, but only with holy hands. The Elector, in his fondness for display, would enjoy life in like manner as the Medician in those days upon the papal throne, perhaps with somewhat more of German seriousness, but in essential features the same. Elector *Albert* and our *Laski* had started from the school of Humanism and

its great master ; the after-path, however, of their spiritual development had led them ever farther asunder ; in that spring of 1539 there was already no longer any point of contact. One of them had risen to the dignity of a cardinal, yea, to the eagerly coveted possession of the golden rose from the Pope, but at the same time had been turned aside to the most manifest rupture with the Reformation. He died, deeply aggrieved at the course of history, and inexorably pushed aside by it in earnest judgment, to his very deathbed dunned by his creditors, while even on his inanimate dust rests the unkindly shadow of the pedlar in indulgences, plying his disgraceful trade, half the profits of which went to the treasury of the splendour-loving Elector, yet without being able to fill it. The path of the other led him into the Evangelical Church, all his ecclesiastical benefices and dignities—and he could perhaps have risen as high in his own land as *Albert* in Germany—resigned of his own free-will, a poor servant of his only Lord, henceforth ever willing and ready to suffer hardship as a soldier of Christ, to the end joyous in the blissful possession of the grace of Christ Jesus.

Laski seems to have remained nearly a year in Mayence, remote from that which was passing in the sumptuous chambers of the Bishop, and devoted to serious studies, if we are not at this time already to seek him in the Netherlands. Our sources fail us for this year ; the stay in Louvain, however, seems, from all the indications, to have had a longer duration than the short interval which is left if we think of *Laski* as remaining in Mayence until his friend received his diploma, and not rather suppose him

to have hastened out of the Netherlands to be present at the ceremony. His friend in the pursuit of the doctor's degree had given lectures on the books of the *Sentences* and some epistles of Paul. The latter in particular must of necessity confirm the two men in their Reformational views. The year did not come to a close without *Hardenberg* having acquired the wished-for dignity. *Laski* was present at the conferring of it. The Emden Library still contains the book which he gave on this occasion to his friend, now crowned with the doctor's cap; it was Reuchlin's *Elements of the Hebrew Language*. At one time the precious volume belonged to Erasmus, whose handwriting ("sum Erasmi, nec muto dominum") it yet bears. Nevertheless it did change its owner when the liberal Pole in so magnanimous a style purchased of the renowned scholar his collection of books. *Hardenberg*, too, regarded the book as doubly valuable on account of the giver; and eight years afterwards wrote upon the title-page, "Therefore [because he had received it as a present from *Laski* on the festive occasion] this book shall not change its master so long as I live, which I testify by this subscription with my own hand."† When, in the following year, the agents of the Inquisition at Louvain burnt at least the books of *Hardenberg*, in vexation that the heretic had escaped them, this book, so highly prized by him, escaped the flames.

Soon after receiving his diploma *Hardenberg* departed to his native land. The faithful friend accompanied him down the Rhine. They had no

* "I belong to Erasmus, and I do not change my owner."

† Spiegel, p. 19.

wish to separate from each other ; the Netherlands possessed many a point of attraction which might entice *A Lasco* in the course of his spiritual development. The home-land of *Erasmus* had not remained foreign to him in his studies of humanity and in his common life with the then most famous son of that land ; he had learnt to know and esteem many a scion of this land ; we call to mind, for instance, his converse with *Utenhove*. His own brother *Jerome* had been called to fulfil more than one difficult diplomatic mission in Brussels ; and his name had there too a good sound in the highest circles.

The Regent of the Netherlands at that time was *Mary*,* the widow of the unfortunate King of Hungary, who lost his young and promising life in the marshes of Mohacz. In her maiden days this highly gifted and studious pupil of Humanism had been much esteemed, and even lauded, by *Erasmus*. Her pious mind had led the young Queen to the study of the Holy Scriptures ; she showed herself not unfavourable to the evangelical movements now spreading in Hungary ; and *Luther* thought himself justified in expecting great things from her. When he received the intelligence of the severe visitation which had befallen the pious widow, he sent to her at Vienna, whither she had

* Peter Alexander, afterwards secretary to Cranmer, Rector of All Hallows, Lombard Street, and Prebendary of Canterbury, was formerly chaplain to this queen (until 1545, to judge from a letter of Myconius to Calvin of March, 1545). He came to England in 1547, was exiled in 1553, and in September, 1554, was, with some hesitation, commanded by Peter Martyr to Calvin. Returned to England in March, 1559, and spent the remainder of his life there. He is referred to in *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation* (Parker Soc., Cambridge, 1846), pp. 67, 331 ; *Zurich Letters* (Parker Soc.), ser. i., pp. 79, 119 ; ser. ii., p. 50.—TR.

fled from the wild hordes of Soliman, together with the exposition of four psalms, that well-known beautiful letter of consolation.* It was a false position in which the Kaiser *Charles* placed his sister by the call to be vicegerent of the Netherlands, because to this position was attached the task of suppressing Protestantism by every means in the land of the Emperor's birth. And the Emperor displayed upon this point his whole uncompromising, lordly, intolerant character, which at least would carry out in the beloved land of his ancestors that which he failed to accomplish in Germany, notwithstanding all his attempts. He purged the suspected surroundings of his sister, even down to the attendants; while she bent to the cruel will of her brother, and was too powerless to decline the dread task, or on her own account to renounce the splendour of viceregal life and with it the friendship of her brother.† In what a painful position did those find themselves, in those grand but stern days, who weakly remained standing at half-way, and therefore were bitterly exposed to the judgment of the word, "He that is not with Me is against Me"! *Laski* would have been no stranger to the Regent. No other name was more frequently in the mouth of friend and foe, in those bloody conflicts which lacerated the fair Hungarian land, than this; and she would certainly have granted the noble Pole a distinguished reception at her court. But not for the sake of court life and court favour had *Laski*

* Compare *Luther*, xxxviii. 370 seq. The psalms expounded are xxxvii., lxii., xciv., and cix.

† Compare the letter of the Emperor to his sister: Lanz, *Korrespondenz Kaisers Karl V.* (Leipsic, 1864), i., p. 418.

turned his back upon the royal court of his own land and wandered forth into straitened exile, nor could he have any pleasure in the sight of a woman who was toiling upon the unnatural task the accomplishment of which could eventually be purchased only at the sacrifice of the denial of her better endeavours. Such persons he was far from seeking ; he avoided them. Other brilliant offers, too, he rejected with decision. When, in the summer days of 1540, he spent a short time at Antwerp, he was visited by the Archchancellor, as likewise by the Margrave of Brandenburg, who was staying there ; offers were made to him in vain on the part of the Emperor as well as on that of King Ferdinand.*

Laski passed by Brussels and its splendid court to return to Louvain. The friendly seat of the Muses was to afford him for the space of a year a desired place of retreat for inwardly maturing in silence. *Erasmus* had on one occasion lauded the renowned University and its fair situation. "Nowhere," said he, "can one with greater quiet and freedom from interruption apply one's self to study ; moreover, the neighbourhood is pleasant and healthful, overspread by an Italian sky."† More than three thousand students out of all lands,—at that time great numbers from France, and not a few from Spain,—assembled in the different lecture rooms ; the number and scientific rank of the professors was

* Kuyper, ii. 552. As regards the chronology of this letter compare the detailed notices in Böhmer, *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana* (Londini, 1874), i. 166, who affords conclusive evidence for the correctness of the date assigned by Kuyper.

† De Ram, *Considérations sur l'Hist. de l'Univ. de Louvain* (Bruxelles, 1854), p. 12.

in due proportion to the great throng of students ; an ample collection of books afforded the desired means for profound research. But Louvain had become at that time in its theological faculty, through the influence of its leaders, a stronghold against the Protestant Church and its doctrine, the worthy, nay even distancing rival of the Sorbonne and of Cologne in opposition to every evangelic movement. The rule, already in force during that year, was confirmed by law in 1545, that no student should be admitted to the University who did not avow himself by a solemn oath to be the enemy of all the doctrinal articles of *Luther* and *Calvin*.* At the head of these most pronounced and militant opponents stood *Latomus*, the authorised spokesman of the faculty, stigmatised by Luther as the Louvain sophist and Ishbi (2 Sam. xxi. 16), whom a pamphlet in my possession characterises as an assuming sycophant.†

Not to sit once more in late years as a student at the feet of teachers who expounded a defunct scholastic theology did *A Lasco* come to Louvain. Nothing leads us to suppose that he held any kind of intercourse with these men, with whose ecclesiastical standpoint he had already entirely broken, and who soon enough discovered what a suspicious kind of person this stranger from Poland was. At

* De Ram, *Considérations sur l'Hist. de l'Univ. de Louvain*, p. 62.

† “Epistola de magistris nostris Lovaniensibus quot et quales sint, quibus debemus magistram illam damnationem Lutherianam.” The letter is addressed to Zwingli—a charming proof how soon the bold act of Luther found a glad response even in Louvain. The tractate appeared five months after Luther had nailed up his theses. The writer has not given his name.

least, it is related that they regarded with distrust *Hardenberg's* intimate converse with him, and that difficulties arose for Hardenberg in consequence. Among the students, who in part were of much more mature age than our university scholars are wont to be, might already be discovered one or another enterprising personality, who, resenting the unnatural restraint in the sacred domain of the faith, inclined to the doctrine of the pure Gospel. Many a Reformational book passed secretly from hand to hand, and eagerly was the free, salvation-bringing word received by the young devout spirits. We know of a few youths who, though with great shyness and reverence for the noble Pole, yet drew towards him in Louvain. Amongst these stands especially prominent *Francisco de Enzinas*, who, as a lad of seventeen, had been brought under Protestant influences in his native town of Burgos in 1537, and two years afterwards, already entirely won to the Gospel, had come to Louvain, simultaneously with *Laski*, in order to continue his studies. He had soon heard of the illustrious Pole, who for the faith's sake quitted the land of his birth, and descended from the brilliant height of an ecclesiastical prince into so obscure and quiet a position. A letter from him to *Laski*, written two years later, describes with eloquence and grace the deep and abiding impression made by the Pole upon the susceptible and ardent Spaniard.* *Enzinas* was already occupied at that time with the translation of the Holy Scriptures into his mother-tongue—a highly lauded work, which procured for the believing young man a

* Gerdes, iii. 82; compare also Böhmer, *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana*, i. 134.

rigorous imprisonment, endured by him with fortitude. Among the Flemings, too, many a devout young man was stirred by the new breathing of the Spirit in the Gospel, and in consequence assumed a friendly bearing towards *Laski*. We think of the gentle *Cassander*, who, less decided than *Enzinas*, subsequently wore himself out in the life-long attempt to bridge over the painful gulf between the two severed Churches, a fruitless endeavour, acceptable to neither of the two parties.

The circles in which *Laski* especially moved in Louvain, and in which he found the greatest profit to his spiritual life, are to be sought not under the shadow of the lecture rooms of the University. They lay out of the way, still contemptuously overlooked at that time and unmolested by the leaders of the Church,—hidden fountain-chambers, wherein the living water collected which for ever slakes the thirst. It is a charming glimpse which is afforded us into these little modest circles ; we willingly enter their assembly for a moment with our friend.

As early as a century and a half before the events of our history there had been kindled in the Netherlands a fire of which the light and warmth was felt with beneficent effect far and wide, and whose blessings extended even beyond the frontiers of the land. He who kindled that fire in the temple was *Gerhard Groot*, this “truly Christian man of the people, a man of marked and deeply earnest character, notwithstanding all the geniality and kindness of a soul-seeking love, of vigorous, resolute, trenchant personality, without fear or favour of men—a man of the most comprehensive knowledge and many sided acquaintance with men, of great acumen, and affect-

ing, moving eloquence." * Were it not impracticable to compare with each other the towering forms of different ages, who bear each the stamp of his own age, one might certainly speak of *Groot* as the Spener of the Romish Church in the time of its decline. Great was the incitement which he gave; one recognises how much it was in accordance with the need of the best spirits of his time, as also of his free and devout people, when he founded the brother and sister-houses, as opposed to the sadly corrupt cloisters, with their beggar-like, degraded occupants. Those who retired into these newly founded houses were truly pious souls, who had calmly broken with the world and all that it has to offer of pleasure and honour, and in quiet and seclusion, almost like a pietistic conventicle, would live for the peace of their own hearts, but not exclusively in contemplative indolent repose. A deep sympathy with the distresses of the time passed through their soul, and they sought the lever for their activity, in checking the prevailing corruption, by preference in the training of the young. Where their brother-houses stood—and that was soon almost everywhere throughout the land—one saw also the most peaceful industrious occupants at once busy in the schools; and the blessing upon their labours was everywhere to be traced, especially among the burghers, who at that time filled the thriving cities of the Netherlands with prosperity. A voice from those brother-houses has given such wonderfully classic expression to the peculiar tone of mind there current, that this voice can since then nevermore be reduced to silence, and

* Herzog, i. 680 (2nd ed.).

finds its devoutly listening hearers in countless numbers within the Evangelical and the Romish Church—it is the ardent, sweet, devout, profoundly contemplative word of *Thomas a Kempis*, who in a unique manner possessed the secret of making himself heard as a solitary voice between the two Churches, a nightingale in the twilight of the breaking day. We do not recognise, in its full tones, the home note of our beloved Evangelical Church in the word of the pious quiet man of the Agnetenberg, near Zwolle ; we detect in more than one passage that his preaching does not entirely accord with that of a Paul : *that bent of mind was not exactly the Reformation*, and could not offer a substitute for it, however essential a preparatory labour it nevertheless remains in the Netherlands.

In Louvain, too, a powerful influence of these brother-houses is to be traced in the instruction of the young. Here too the free spirit of the citizens was awakened ; and that profound pious earnestness, which sought to investigate Divine truth at the fountain-head, was effectually kindled. Precisely in the burgher circles was stirred up a vigorous self-consciousness, which would not any longer blindly submit to all the arbitrary precepts of the Church and its dominating priests, whose immoral walk caused so great scandal and offence to the honest burgher-folk. Specially the Guild of the Cloth-weavers was very strongly represented in Louvain also ; Flemish cloth was everywhere in high request. Even as far as Cracow the wealthy merchants despatched their bales of costly wares, and by this time also beyond the seas and to the farthest coasts. The other trades, too, were flourishing in this populous

university town. There was present a lively, assiduous zeal, which now turned to those great religious questions that knocked in particular at the door of the quiet burgher-houses, and there too claimed admittance and solution. Let us enter one of these houses, in which our friend was wont often to be found, yea, where he even made his abode for a considerable time.

The unpretending burgher-house lies not in the centre of the town and of its intellectual life, where at that time, in the freshness of sumptuous and cheerful splendour, stood the monumental structure of the Council House, to this day the fair witness to the lively, active mind of the citizens of that period ; we have to seek it in the outskirts of the town, close to the ramparts, where the little stream La Voer mingles with the rivulet of the town La Dyle. There, on the Bolleborre, dwelt *Antoinette van Rosmers*, who was closely connected with the best families of the place. The year before (1539) she had lost her husband and two children during the prevalence of a pestilence ; only the one grown-up daughter, *Gudula*, had remained to her. A widow at the age of fifty, she had also been deprived of her property ; she must seek a more modest dwelling ; perhaps also she made some small addition to her income by the letting of her rooms, for we know from Enzinas that *Laski* dwelt at her house and went in and out thereat.* The trying visitation had only led the pious widow and her like-minded

* Campan, *Mémoires de Franzisco de Enzinas* (Bruxelles, 1862), i., p. 102 : "Antoinette était presque de la plus honnête et principale famille de toute la ville ; Monsieur Jan Laski avait quelquefois logé en sa maison."

daughter more deeply into the Word of God ; that which the Church, with its priests, did not afford her, the Lord conferred upon her in the Gospel, the German translation of which she had been able secretly to obtain. The good Word of God became her consoler and her only teacher, at whose feet she sat, supremely intent on learning the *one* thing needful. And God led her to the discovery of the pearl of great price. Her house became the centre of a group of companions in the faith, who often found themselves in a wondrous way gathered together, as though God Himself had brought them there. Only quite in secret, in a stolen manner, did they assemble in the back room of the widow, with closed doors, as the Apostles at the Paschal time for fear of the Jews. Of us the quiet believing people need be in no terror ; and undisturbed can we, with *Laski*, join for one evening in their little gathering.

There are always but few who meet at the house on the Bolleborre, in order to escape all attention, for the Quintin's church stands not far from the house, and who knows but the suspicious priests have their doubts, or even have their informers in the neighbourhood ? To-day there have assembled in the house of the widow the rarely absent *Josse van Ousberghen*, a furrier by trade, deeply grounded in the Gospel, full of peace of soul, of a quiet nature, but immovably steadfast and robust in his faith. With him enters one of the sculptors, *Jan Beyarts*, along with his already aged wife, *Catharine Metsys* ; the member of their household, too, *Jan Schats*, is not absent this evening. If we were to enter again another time, we should meet with new faces. When, at the expiration of about three years,

the enemies stretched forth their blood-seeking hands against this little flock of believers, they apprehended a band of forty-three companions in the faith (March, 1543).

The edification begins with *Josse's* reading a passage of the New Testament, and endeavouring to explain it. Those present take part in the exposition; one thing helps the other in the unfolding of Scripture; and we observe from the deeply edifying remarks that those present are no longer children in understanding. After this the *Postil* is brought in, long a specially favourite book of edification with them. They know not much of him who wrote the book, the great German Reformer, and are in no kind of communication with him; but what they read there agrees so fully with the dear Word of God and so powerfully refreshes their souls by its vigorous way of speaking. The book then has eluded the prying eyes of the censors and the priests; over there in Amsterdam there were already many booksellers who kept the forbidden Reformational writings and knew how to deliver them to the purchaser, and full many an enkindling tractate found its way into the workroom even in Louvain. By cunning secret paths it had eluded the vigilance of those on the watch. A method to which recourse was frequently had, and that with success, was to bind up the coveted Evangelical fly-sheet with a bulky volume of indifferent contents, to which the cursory glance of the censor heedlessly granted the privilege of diffusion.*

This reading from the Postil, or some other book

* Compare Campan, ii. 338.

of edification, was followed by a free conversation on one or other article of the faith. Of one accord were they in the rejection of purgatory. The Sacred Supper they regarded for the most part only as a commemorative meal ; they could find no passage in their New Testament which constrained them to suppose the actual bodily presence of the Lord in the sign of the bread and wine, or, yet more, to infer the transubstantiation of the Romish Church. These views were not at all strange to *Laski*. He had already heard them uttered in Basle, in the private circle of *Erasmus* and his intimate friends. One would hear them at that time in different places, even where there was no imagination of their fully outlined form in *Zwingli*. Perhaps at the close of the meeting, after the prayer, they would sing in a suppressed tone one of the Psalms, translated into the Flemish by a clergyman of the cathedral church, *Paul van Rovere*, an old devoted master, feeble in body, but vigorous in spirit and well-disposed towards the Evangelicals in Louvain.*

With sacred earnestness did they hold these conferences. When once a word of derision escaped the lips of one present concerning the doctrine of purgatory, of the untruth of which all were convinced, the derider drew down upon himself a stern rebuke. They did not wish to separate from the Church ; they wished to remain with it in peace, so long as they were only let alone in their Bible-searching and mutual edification. They had already indeed passed beyond the boundary line marked for them by the Church, even farther than those

* Campan, ii. 466.

Brothers of the Common Life from whom the spiritual incentive had unquestionably proceeded to them ; but they were fain to leave the whole decision-fraught question untouched, if they were only suffered to live quietly in accordance with their faith. And they lived out this life of faith also among themselves in a form as beautiful as that of the first little assemblies of the Apostolic time. Where one was sick, the others held faithful watching ; and with the spiritual ministry went hand in hand the ceaseless bodily tending of the sick brother. They had collected their little fund out of the voluntary alms, and from this were wont to aid such as were in distress ; moreover, they went in search of others in the town who were indigent and necessitous, to confer upon them the alms willingly bestowed. They lived and moved in the Word of God as their native element. When in the evening after labour they met on their walks along the ramparts, or when on the warm summer days they passed beyond the city gates, perhaps to the adjacent Rosselberg, and met, as they supposed, unobserved, the one or the other would draw forth his securely guarded Testament from its leathern pouch ; a few verses would be read, and would afford to those walking in the truth abundant material for coveted interchange of experience. One discovers, from that which is related, the joy and delight of people who have long wandered in devious paths, but now see themselves led by the Lord their Shepherd in green pastures and by still waters.

Laski, who, with *Hardenberg* and *Enzinas*, had been brought into contact with this evangelical circle, probably found here that of which he had

been in quest : a little believing congregation, according to the Word of God, earnestly striving after sanctification of life ; loyal forms, strong in the faith, ready on the morrow to go to the stake and seal their faith with their blood. The dawning light of this coming day already rested upon those illuminated features, the aurora of their martyrdom ; this is ever a refreshing and gladdening sight. Those whose entering into the house of the noble *Antoinette* for quiet edification we have just witnessed, all had the joy within three years of praising the name of the Lord by their death. The men whose names we have mentioned suffered with constancy death by fire and halter ; the heroic women were buried alive. Thus the Romish Church punished the offence of loving the Word of God, and leading a hallowed life in accordance with its truth. The barbarous punishment did not quench the sacred fire ; on the contrary, the sparks flew throughout the whole land, and carried the flames only the farther.

How greatly our friend felt himself at home in the midst of these devout people is evident from the fact, among others, that in the social life he lived with them the resolution was matured of trampling down the last plank for a retreat to the old life of the priesthood, and breaking through the injunction of celibacy. This step was the public and final renouncing of the ordinances of the Romish Church, the henceforth irremediable breach with that Church. From among the simple burghers' daughters of the city he chose to himself a companion for life. We regret, after much research, not to have been able to discover the faintest trace of her family connections or of her past history ; even the maiden name is

unknown to us. We can only suppose that the fair shadow of the spiritual life of this devout circle had fallen fully and abidingly into her soul too; we may perhaps discover in her a young friend and companion of *Gudula*, like her too in the flower of her age, of the renowned beauty of the Flemish women, full of nobility of bearing.* She seems indeed to have had relatives in Louvain. A year after *Laski* had quitted the town she returned for a short time on a visit to her native place, bringing with her the first-born baby-daughter, the very image of the father, with motherly joy to show the child to the grandparents. *Enzinus* was acquainted with the wife of *Laski* from her maiden days. Hardly did he hear of her visit to Louvain before he hastened to her house to greet her, and to obtain tidings of her husband, whom he was just then thinking of looking up in his new home in Friesland.†

Not very long after his marriage did *Laski* continue to dwell in Louvain. The counsel which he gave a few years afterwards to his friend, still hesitating to leave the cloister, he now fulfilled with swift resolution himself. "I believe those words are given by inspiration of the Spirit of God which are written (*Isa.* lii. and *2 Cor.* vi.), 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate.' If thou referrest this word to flight in spirit, of a certainty he who has once truly and inwardly accomplished this can no longer voluntarily hold converse with those whom he sees continue to dishonour the merits of Christ."‡

* As such, at least, the Spaniard describes the daughter of the widow Antoinette.

† Gerdes, iii. 82.

‡ Kuyper, ii. 557.

Trying times set in. Over in Ghent insurrections had broken out : the friends of the Reformation had attempted to shake off by force the oppressive yoke of the intolerant Church. Kaiser *Charles* had at the intelligence thereof hastened to the land of his birth, with violence to suppress the dangerous heresy. From every part of the dominant Church he was urged to proceed with unrelenting rigour, and there was no need in his case of any strong pressure to this end. Severe laws were enacted. All books printed in Germany within the past twenty years were interdicted ; no one was permitted to compose, or even sing, spiritual songs in the language of the country ; the conventicles* were forbidden ; even the thoughts were no longer allowed to pass unchallenged. There was no hesitation in Louvain about carrying these Draconian laws into effect. One of the first to experience their operation was *Hardenberg*. With fearless eloquence the young doctor of theology, after his return from Mayence, expounded the epistles of Paul to a crowded audience ; the citizens, too, loved to listen to the ingenuous speech of the gifted man, who "spake not as the scribes" of Louvain. He was accused at court. The order was given that he should be carried captive to Brussels, whereby his fate would have been sealed ; the capital of the empire had then acquired the melancholy cognomen of "slaughter-house of the Christians." The Louvain citizens interceded on his behalf ; the appeal was successful

* The name seems here to occur for the first time in this signification : " Prohibentur congressus hominum de religione loquentium ; quæ ab illis [who take part therein] conventicula appellantur " (Campan, i. 130).

to the extent that for this time the inquisitors were content with burning his heretical books and condemning him in the costs of the proceedings. Moreover, he was banished from the city ; he retired accordingly to his cloister of Aduard.

Nor did *Laski* any longer continue to dwell in the inhospitable Louvain, among men who, in place of investigating the truth, preferred to act as bloodhounds for the Inquisition. He went in search of a land where, unmolested, he could live out his faith in the greatest seclusion. Close to the frontier of the Netherlands lay, as a hidden corner of the earth, a little free domain, which offered a friendly asylum in those days of persecution. It was East Friesland. Thither did our friend, again taking in his hand the traveller's staff, direct his steps.

The way thither ran northwards, past Groningen. It is more than probable that *A Lasco* made a diversion from Groningen to the cloister of Aduard, distant only some seven or eight miles, which had received *Hardenberg* within its walls. The cloister was larger-hearted and more lenient than the University. The banished one of Louvain had not only found refuge in the hospitable cell of the monastery ; not only was the liberal-minded monk left without interference in the enjoyment of his evangelical views ; the abbot even granted him the right of preaching and lecturing, and the monks now eagerly listened to a discourse which the students were forbidden to hear. *Hardenberg* owed this freedom to the accomplished abbot of the widely renowned monastery. For the past twelve years it had been under the oversight of *Johannes Reekamp*, in the succession of the abbots the one most highly

distinguished.* Our refined Pole, too, was captivated by this noble and intellectual personality. He wishes all monasteries had abbots like this, devoting themselves with like zeal and skill to the education of youth ; yea, he sincerely loves the kindly abbot, and lauds the purity and uncorruptedness of his character.† But no cloister can enchain him more ; it is not long before he points out to his friend that an abiding even in the largest-hearted cloister was for a man of his convictions an hypocrisy, which the man must dare to shake off who would stand approved in the truth. As this cloister, lying there hard by the confines of the land, in its doings and practisings had the frontier territory of the Romish Church already behind it, so it would not be difficult to find many similar ones elsewhere, which served as welcome retreats for faint-hearted souls in those unkindly days, in which men could silently cherish the evangelical convictions they had not the courage to avow, and at the same time enjoy the agreeable sense of an existence free from care. Such feeble natures are surely also worthy of no better fate than in this way slowly to wither and disappear, world-forgotten, behind the walls of a monastery.

For our friend a more pleasant portion had been provided by his Lord. He passed the cloister by, to advance for his confession's sake farther abroad, deeper into the conflict and into bitter sorrow, but with this also into the gracious knowledge that such a life is a glorifying of God.

* Koppius, *Vitæ ac Gesta Abbatum Adwerdensium* (Gron., 1850), p. 37.

† Kuyper, ii., p. 553.

VIII.

AT THE GOAL IN EAST FRIESLAND.

*E*ALA FRIA FRESENA : "Welcome, free Frisian!" Such was the salutation with which the deputies out of the seven maritime districts of East Friesland hailed each other in olden times when they assembled on the Tuesday of Whitsun week in each year at Upstallsboom, a rising ground in the vicinity of Aurich, to take counsel together on the rights which every Frieslander was pledged to maintain. Yes, a free people there in the shadow of primeval oaks, and worthy indeed of offering him the greeting of welcome! They have manfully defended themselves centuries long against wave and billow of the encroaching sea, which threatened to swallow up the low-lying tract of land, and actually did, spite of fence, and dyke, and dam, in the course of the ages swallow up so many a strip of land ; they have also just as manfully and bravely risen against all who would subdue the hardy, stubborn race ; their unvarying answer, spoken with the sword in the bloody conflict of men, was the proud, noble saying : "We will remain free and Frisian." Jacob Grimm gives to the name the interpretation, that, like the name of the Franks, it signifies a free people. Jealous were the folk of this their treasure ; even the height

of the houses was prescribed, that not any one in the nation might exalt himself and aspire to high things. With satisfaction does Tacitus in his day describe this race between the Weser and the Ems, high in the north, on the coast of the sea. They are for him a high-minded people among the Germans ; just, without craving for the possession of others ; not men of violence, but heroic and well-nigh invincible when they see their freedom and their soil imperilled. *Charles the Great* (Charlemagne) had need of putting forth all his strength ; it was, moreover, a thirty years' war which he had to wage against this people, and the victor after all was obliged to concede to this hardy race its old laws and equalities.

Half a thousand years and more had since then elapsed. The people did homage to no overlord ; almost every village had its own petty chieftain, who built to himself forts, and engaged to protect the inhabitants of the village. But then these *hovetlings* sought to outvie each other in power and influence. Troublous times ensued, wherein the strength of the nation was exhausted in endless internal feuds, and unfitted for presenting a victorious front to the common external foe. Chieftains who were on terms of friendship concluded on St. Martin's Eve, 1430, a league of freedom, under the Upstallsboom, and chose as the head of the league the son of that noble *Enno Cirksena*, who had himself declined election on account of his age. It was a happy choice. Rapidly had the family of the Cirksenas risen to eminence ; prudent, full of warm devotion to the nation, maintaining and defending its rights and liberties, they had thereby at the

same time confirmed the authority of their own house, and had vanquished or paralysed in their influence those hovetlings who refused to bend to their commanding power. The two sons of the venerable Enno, *Edzard* and *Ulric*, held sway in succession; after the death of the latter, his widow *Theda*,—a grand-daughter of *Foko Ukena*, once the most powerful opponent of the old Enno,—a true “*Frysang wife*,” grasped with firm masculine hand the helm of government until the majority of her son *Edzard*.

Theda, the highly revered mother of the country, died in 1494. The prelates and hovetlings of the land assembled, and, with the approval of the popular assemblies, acknowledged her son the Count *Edzard* as regent. For upwards of thirty years the destinies of the country rested in his hand, and that so securely and prosperously that the grateful people styled him the Great, and the remembrance of him is yet cherished in the land. Strong in war, strong in peace, he was ever the guardian of his people, himself a genuine Frieslander, faithful, temperate, prudent, just, full of glowing love of country, devout with all his heart, and overflowing with kindly feeling, even towards the humblest in the land. In 1528 he fell peacefully asleep, with the words of Simeon upon his dying lips. He had in believing spirit seen the Saviour, as He was made known by the Reformation, and travelled through the German land, blessing, pardoning. Now would he as His servant depart in peace. His son *Enno II.* succeeded him in the government, not like the father in all respects, and more addicted to a life of pleasure than to serious labour for the prosperity of his country. For the troublous times in which his

reign of ten years falls, with their great and momentous demands, he was hardly adequate ; he went not to work with certainty and with readiness for self-sacrifice, clearly conscious of his task, and from his heart devoted to it. He rather suffered things to take their own course, and that to happen which he was too indolent and too indifferent to avert. Thus his people had many heavy taxes imposed upon them, and the land was called to suffer irreparable losses : it had become a battle-field for the most diverse views ; a ferment pervaded all ranks of society, and it was felt how much a strong hand was wanting to curb the excited spirits in this time of agitation, and to lead them into the right path. In 1540 *Enno* died, at the age of only thirty-five, just in those days when *Laski* arrived in Emden. His widow, Countess *Anne*, of the house of Oldenburg, akin to the energetic Theda in more than one respect, assumed the reins of government as guardian of her sons.

The free and indomitable spirit of the Frisian people distinctly appears likewise in its religious life. It is a devout people, which bows before its God in heaven, but is little disposed to bring its neck under human ordinances. At the threshold of its history stands, in strongly outlined form, its king *Radbod*. Against *Charles Martel* he had valiantly defended the liberties of his people, but the superiority of force was too great ; the Frankish duke vanquished the Frisian king. With the victor the missionaries had entered the land, the hero-forms, to be looked upon as messengers of the Lord Himself. The conquered *Radbod* had to listen to the preaching of the Cross, and finally became willing to undergo baptism.

Already he is standing in the river to receive the consecration, when the Frisian king asks the bishop, "Where may my ancestors be? In heaven or in hell?" "Thy ancestors died as heathen, and are consequently all gone down to hell." In perverse mood *Radbod* came up out of the water, and said, "Then I will sooner be with my own kinsmen in hell, than with the few Christians in heaven." No subsequent persuasion could induce him to receive baptism.

After only a few years none of his tribesmen could any longer withstand the preaching of the Cross. Already an old man, *Winfrid* returned to the land of his early labours; and now he began to accomplish among the Frieslanders that wherein in former decades he had not been able to succeed. *Liudger* and *Willehad* were disciples of Winfrid, and themselves sons of the Frisian people,—men to whom the Christians of the land were devotedly attached; in ever-gathering hosts the people came forward for baptism. Once become Christian, the nation clung with piety and fidelity to its faith; hardly anywhere did heathendom sink into so dark a night of oblivion as among the Frisians. But in the ecclesiastical province, too, the people made its peculiar impress, and through the centuries defended and preserved its rights. There was no episcopal see in the land: one half of the country was under the pastoral staff of the Bishop of Bremen, the other under that of the Bishop of Munster; any influence of these ecclesiastical princes upon the destiny of the country was not perceptible. To the demands of a *Gregory VII.* for the introduction of celibacy, the Frieslanders opposed their maxim, "The priests are as much

men as we are ; " and even the papal power was frustrated by the inflexible will of the people, who would suffer no priests condemned to single life to be forced upon them. Of the storms which so often agitated to its depths the Church in Rome and in its main seats, only a slight surge reached the distant coast of the north, and the minds of men were hardly stirred by it. They lived on after the godly manner of the fathers ; here and there in the land the churches rose in goodly number, and presently also the cloisters. To these mighty stone edifices alone was the right willingly conceded of towering above the simple dwellings of the citizens ; for higher than the Frieslander may only his God dwell.

Things became changed in the days of *Luther*. The writings of the German Reformer fell betimes into the hands of the vigorous Count *Edzard II.* ; and, with growing pleasure and approval, he became charmed with the pious, daring spirit with which, in a way hitherto unexpected, he was there brought into contact. The fearless manly word of Luther rang forth so bold and free, as though it had been spoken by a Frieslander. The Count desired of *Luther* a preacher of the Gospel. In the land itself the fitting and qualified personality was to be found—a disciple of the Brothers of the Common Life in Zwolle, Master *Aportanus*. He did not stand long alone. In the most diverse places of the land a longing for the preaching of the Gospel was awakened ; then also men offered themselves, mostly liberal-minded priests, who had been affected in their youth by the teaching of the Brothers of the Common Life, and who saw in the new movement

the realisation of that for which they had once received the incitement in their schools. No one as yet thought of a separation. It might happen that the pure proclamation of the Gospel was made from the pulpit in the same church in which, an hour earlier or later, another priest would read the mass at the altar. The heart of the people, however, turned quickly and with decision from the man at the altar to the man in the pulpit, and to the sacred theme of his preaching. For the Frisian is in earnest in everything, and not least in the domain of faith. "Friesland does not sing" is a well-known saying; but its people, of robust nature, firm and enduring, courageous and active, ponder over the highest questions of life, and what they have extorted therefrom they preserve, like their country, against every foreign power, against every threatening billow. Averse to all outward pageantry, in the church as elsewhere, they are inclined, on the other hand, to dwell on the word of truth, and by it to be led to repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Their reserved, almost inaccessible nature, as it often meets us under the weather-stained forms in the marsh lands, retains with tenacious fidelity that which it has acquired, at no slight cost, even in the spiritual domain.

At the time of *Edzard's* death the evangelical doctrine had been diffused throughout the whole land, the departing Count being attached to it in faithful love. Even on his deathbed he exhorted his sons to continue in this doctrine. His successor kept his word. In the carrying of it out, however, he availed himself of his promise mainly in order to confiscate the abundant possessions of the cloisters,

and with their wealth to procure for himself the gratifications which his heart desired. He acted in many cases despotically and unjustly. The ill-favoured traits of the violent movement displayed themselves, as in so many other things, in the wrongful encroachments on the ecclesiastical possessions on the part of the Frisian landgrave. But yet the whole movement, in its deepest and innermost core, was too pure and true to admit of being distorted or forced into a misshapen degeneracy by such acts of violence. No, not in Friesland either.

The first decisive impulse to the Reformation movement in these Low German provinces, too, had unquestionably been given by the earliest and unique Reformatory writings of *Luther*, and his bold impetuous confronting of kaiser, and empire, and pope, so heroically free, in submission only to the Gospel of the Lord. But the impulse given did not in East Friesland continue to bind itself closely and slavishly to the giant form of the German Reformer. The free Frisian likes to walk in his own ways ; the well-nigh overpowering influence of the Wittenberger was broken beyond the Weser and the Ems.

In the case of the Magister *Apertanus*, too, whose mighty personality decidedly impressed upon his land the stamp of its theological bent and bias, there are early manifest—in part because he was himself a genuine Frieslander—views upon the one decisive point which *Luther* would have already rejected without hesitation as erroneous doctrine of the Sacramentarians. As early as 1526 the preacher in Emden writes such sentences as this : “ God, who has always enabled us to bear in memory His

great works and wondrous deeds by means of a sign or seal, has given to us Christians baptism and the Supper, as He gave to Noah the rainbow, to Abraham circumcision, to the children of Israel the eating of the paschal lamb. As those are only sign and seal, so also baptism and bread and wine are not the Divine purification and sanctification, but only certain and infallible signs and seals on the part of God regarding the things mentioned. . . . To know Christ and to receive Him with the whole heart through faith, that is truly to drink His blood and truly to eat His flesh. Inasmuch as Christ is corporeally in heaven at the right hand of His heavenly Father, so He is not corporeally, but spiritually, present in the bread." What *Aportanus* taught in this form in Emden, that in Norden his brave companion in the faith and conflict, *Heinrich Rese*, in 1527, composed and sang in that spiritual song which quickly passed from mouth to mouth, in which it is said:—"Faith is the true eating;—Else we may not suppose—To enjoy in a bodily wise—Such wholesome meat.—Faith receiveth Christ Himself—And all that He hath for us done,—His flesh and blood, His body and soul,—Yea, in Him God Himself altogether."* But that is the loud echo, far in the north, of the doctrine of Zwingli; it encountered opposition, as well on the Romish side as on the part of evangelical preachers who attached themselves more closely to *Luther*; yet it comes out victoriously and clearly in the earliest Confession of Faith, which the evangelical preachers issued immediately after the

* Cornelius, *Der Anteil Ostfrieslands an der Ref. bis zum J. 1535* (printed for private circulation), p. 20.

death of Count *Edzard* (1528),* to which there was appended in the same year a detailed explanation.

In accordance with the sense of freedom on the part of its inhabitants, Friesland soon became the asylum of all those persecuted for their faith's sake in the neighbouring States. The influx was very considerable. The little country contained a motley array of persons representing the most diverse religious views, in those days a unique phenomenon as though there by the sea an island had arisen with laws such as have elsewhere been established only within the most recent times. From the Netherlands the adherents of the Evangelical Church flocked in to the hospitable harbour of freedom of conscience. Amongst them, and mingled with them, came also the Anabaptists—*Heinrich Niclaes* here carried on his practices for a time, then again *David Joris*; everywhere persecuted, *Carlstadt* reposed here a while: a real rendezvous of the most manifold enthusiasts. Their influence failed not to make itself felt, especially under the rule of *Enno*, who readily let things take their course. From Bremen had come preachers who thought they could oppose a barrier to the rising disorder by a close and exclusive adhesion to the doctrines of Luther; but the community rose indignantly against such demand. Nor did laws of government, framed in accordance with the Marburg Articles, prove of great avail, specially inasmuch as no obedience was yielded to

* On the origin of this important confessional writing see Emmius, *Rerum Frisicarum Historia* (Lugd. Bat., 1616), p. 346. The Confession itself, with its thirty-three articles, is printed in Meiners, *Oostvrieslands Kerkelijke Geschiedenis* (Gron., 1783), i., p. 53.

them elsewhere. Then the attempt was made by the Count, a few years later, to obtain the ascendancy for Lutheranism by the agency of certain Luneburg preachers. Equally in vain. As early as 1538 the supposed deliverers were obliged to quit the land ; all their endeavours, supported as they were by the power of authority, were rendered ineffectual by the free sentiment of the people. But the confusion likewise increased to an alarming extent ; no one proved strong enough to restore order and give peace to the land.

Such was the state of East Friesland when *John a Lasco* crossed over from Groningen, here in quiet to live in the midst of his studies.

I. THE WAITING TIME.

It must have been in the latter autumn of 1540 that our friend, weary of the rising persecution in Louvain and the whole domains of the regent of the Netherlands, longing for repose to live in accordance with the promptings of his faith, sought the friendly shelter of the Frisian land.

Emden was not in those days an inviting place of residence. The sea washed right up to the town wall ; and in the chill autumn storms, the murky winter nights, the swelling flood dashed angrily against the town. Damp and raw hung the mists over the low-lying lands. The narrow streets, the little modest dwelling-houses, hardly afforded sufficient shelter to the inhabitants, steeled as they were from childhood to all such discomforts of rude climate ; altogether inhospitable must they appear to a stranger, especially to a Pole, used to the comforts of the patrician houses in Cracow. When,

in the present day, we pass through the clean, spruce, albeit somewhat quiet streets of Emden, we feel as though the town had fallen into a sleep of three hundred years, and we were passing through the very streets which *Laski* once trod. If this had been so, we should have to describe the houses as more habitable. But the aspirations for greater refinement, of which the eloquent witnesses greet us in the ancient mansions, and particularly in the graceful town house, arose only in the second half of the sixteenth century ; and were, in no small measure, the consequence, as also grateful fruit, of that spirit which *Laski* ever toiled mightily to enkindle. For by *Laski* was the fair seal more deeply impressed upon Emden of being the asylum of those persecuted for their faith's sake ; and the fugitive Netherlanders and Englishmen abundantly repaid such right of sanctuary by their diligence and activity.

The means, likewise, of our exile seem to have been at that time too scanty for protecting himself by greater conveniences against the stress of wind and weather. He has written home to have his collection of books forwarded by way of Frankfort to him at Emden, and now sends to his friend in Aduard a list of his duplicates for the supplementing of the copious library of the monastery, with a view at the same time of defraying from the proceeds his expenses of living. Towards the inhabitants of Emden his relation was that of a stranger. To the educated among them he could easily make himself intelligible in the mother-tongue of the Humanists ; from the people, however, he was separated, as by an impassable gulf, by that Low German (Dutch)

language, sounding so entirely different from that which he had acquired of the German language in Basle. But it was a people here in Friesland that could not, like a race of Polish kmetons, be passed aside unregarded ; nor certainly would *Laski* now wish so to slight them.

To all these difficulties in the way of becoming at home in this rude and uninviting region there was added, in the case of our friend, that of a painful physical disorder. We have to think of him in this respect as, like Paul, having a thorn in the flesh, may also regard him as otherwise resembling that great Apostle, who had learnt in the school of suffering and in the instruction of the Gospel, that the grace of his Lord was sufficient for him. Even the first reports which we heard concerning *Laski* in Bologna lead us to infer a delicate state of health, such as to cause anxiety to his immediate friends. During the last thirteen years of his life in his own land he had been physically well.* But now, in the cold, damp, low-lying lands, the attacks of ague had returned with renewed violence. Food to which he was not accustomed had deranged his stomach, which suffered the more from the remedies prescribed to him by the physicians. Continued vomiting tortures the sufferer ; the short journey to the church suffices well-nigh to exhaust him ; if he reads only a little, a dimness comes over his eyes ; a few lines of a letter cost him a day of pain. Yet all this discomfort wrung from him no single murmur. “To God be the glory, who is reminding me in grace by such bodily admonitions of my guilt and

* Kuyper, ii. 552.

obligation to Him." He already thought he would have to yield to the urgent exhortations of his friends and to leave Emden. But the winter passed away, and spring brought improvement; he determined to remain. He had become attached to the place; here he had found what he sought,—a quiet retreat, where he could unmolested devote himself to his studies.

It is unfortunately not permitted us to obtain a glimpse of his course of study during the quiet year which followed. We see only that new works of importance in the theological domain do not long escape his attention. He commends on one occasion the vigorous language of *Melanchthon's* tractate, which appeared in 1539,—"The principal [*für-nembste*] difference between pure Christian doctrine of the Gospel and the idolatrous papistical doctrine,"—a production which, as he tells his friend in the cloister, has been read with the most lively interest by the Emperor himself, and wherein, with admirable brevity and condensation, *Melanchthon* has touched upon the main articles of the faith. From his distant watchtower by the sea *Laski* followed the progress of events in the ecclesiastical world. It was then the order of the day to treat of the most difficult and obscure questions of theology in lengthy deliberations. He who should wish to follow the course of such a discussion merely as an event of the day would be insensibly placed in presence of the most important problems, and involuntarily called upon to furnish a solution of them. How much more so our friend, whose serious studies continually urged him, for his own enlightenment and confirmation in the faith, to labour on the answering

of the questions raised. In November, 1540, deputies from the different States had assembled for conference at Worms. Ranke calls attention to the extraordinary fact that in this instance the representatives of the papacy were divided in opinion ; those of Protestantism, on the other hand, were at one.* The Wittenberg *Concord* as yet cemented the minds together ; *Calvin* and *Melanchthon*, both present, were united in intimate confidence. The main question turned upon the point of ecclesiastical law which of the two Churches abides in the fellowship of the true and ancient Church, and, consequently, which has a right to lay claim to the title of *Catholic*. The question must exert a powerful attraction upon Laski, and urge him to studies of which the results appear in the important labours of after-days. This conference at Worms was followed, in the beginning of the subsequent year, by a Conference on Religion, held at Ratisbon, the latter in presence of the Emperor himself. For years the two Churches had not approached each other in so conciliatory a spirit as here. The *Granvillas* and *Contarinis* on the one hand, the *Bucers* and *Melanchthons* on the other, were inclined to concessions which, in the present day, would have carried the one to the bench of the Old Catholics, the other to the vicinity of the Central Party. On that side they were willing to leave the marriage of the priesthood an open question so far as Germany was concerned, and in like manner the concession of the cup to the laity ; on this side some of the princes were not disinclined under certain conditions to acknowledge the primacy of the Pope. Nay, even

* Ranke, *Deutsche Gesch. im Zeitalter der Reformation* (Berl., 1852), iv., p. 156.

as regards the vital point of the doctrine of justification, there fell from the lips of *Contarini* and those of kindred spirit utterances which must be characterised as not widely removed from the doctrine of the Gospel. On the doctrine of transubstantiation first became again glaringly apparent the opposition, which could not be concealed ; and the rift, once opened, became ever wider. Not even this Conference on Religion had attained the object for the bringing about of which both sides had shown the most considerate readiness. An accommodation of the differences was no longer possible.

To our friend, in his distant asylum, this conference, too, of which the intelligence spread so quickly through Germany, brought with it the necessity of submitting all the points of division once more to the most earnest examination before the bar of his own conscience. The decision could not be doubtful. The result was for him a yet more decided severance from the Romish Church, a yet more powerful emphasising of the Protestant standpoint.

The more strongly and decisively the emphasising of Protestantism manifested itself with *Laski*, the more urgent was he, with his friend in the cloister, to come to decision. *Laski* must have orally called upon his friend to depart ; Hardenberg still hesitated, but the sting against which it was vain to strive had already been implanted in his soul by *A Lasco*. "That which you write concerning shame, pain, grief, and all the wretchedness that constantly tortures you, how in all the world shall I believe that, since you yourself assert that Christ unquestionably approves of the reasons for your inten-

tion? In presence of Him you are thus sure of your cause; but in presence of me you blush and torment yourself. What, am I then greater than He? He who sanctifies his repose in Christ can no longer be deprived of it by men. . . . You reject the example of Hezekiah, as, on account of the difference of position, foreign to your office. But what he, the guardian of the outward discipline, did with the iron, that you must do in your lectures, not with vague general reproaches, but with that extraordinary hammer which smites even the rocks. It is the task of a theologian to admonish every one of his guilt and duty. If your superiors will yield no obedience to the admonition, nay, if they will not suffer you to admonish, if they compel you to suppress it and to dissemble, and you yield to them, is that to reprove with boldness? Nor do you rightly compare Babylon with Babylon. For we have no idol which we worship; but you [*i.e.*, the Romanists] worship as God that abomination which you set up in the holy place in public worship, and are the servants of such idolatry. If some idols have still remained with us, they lie there publicly despised and neglected. For what drawing of the Spirit you are still waiting I know not. I believe that it is the Spirit of God who says (*Isa. lii. 11*; *2 Cor. vi. 17*), 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate.' And the same Spirit speaks a like word in the Revelation (*xviii. 4*), 'Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins.' If you refer this to the spiritual flight, it is certain that he who has once truly in spirit thus pondered on this flight will not still cleave to those whom he sees continually dishonouring the virtue and merit

of Christ. As for myself, I love you, my Albert, as ever ; but your dilatoriness I do not love." *

This is the honest, manly language of a true soldier of Christ, who is not ashamed of the Gospel, but boldly confesses the Lord without disguise, and with joyful resolution has for His sake severed every bond which could enchain him to the world, to feel himself held henceforth only by that one bond which links the redeemed and liberated soul to its Saviour. Thus, as entirely separated and inexorably resolved, *Laski* would not yet have expressed himself while in the circle of the Bible-readers at Louvain ; with rapid strides he presses forward upon the career, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to that which is before, recognising his strength to lie in the fact that he has been apprehended of Christ.

And he rests not till he has forced the lingering friend to the like momentous step. *Hardenberg* brings forward a number of difficulties, which show the severe conflict through which his soul was passing ; † in the letter just cited we have indeed the refutation of single points, which the oral converse in Emden had perhaps not fully cleared up. *Hardenberg* may have seen in the church at Emden the images of the saints, which had not yet been put away ; hence the doubt whether the change would not be, after all, a passing from one Babylon to another Babylon—a doubt so easily arising in one who was hesitating. The interchange

* Kuyper, ii. 557.

† The library of Munich contains the interesting MS. in *Hardenberg's* own handwriting. *Spiegel* (p. 27) reproduces it in a condensed form.

of letters is continued through a period of some months ; it is an affecting conflict which Laski unremittingly wages with his friend.

The lingering *Hardenberg* could not in the long run withstand this manly and pressing urgency. It is true it was only in the spring of 1543 that the monk in his Bernardin cowl knocked at the door of *Laski*. The monk's garb was here put aside and laid up, and *Laski's* wife took care that the moths should not consume the woollen garment.* From Emden *Hardenberg* very soon went on to Wittenberg, to establish himself in the doctrines of the Evangelical Church under the oversight of *Melanchthon*. An intimate relation of friendship quickly united the two men, who were more spiritually akin to each other than was the case with the resolute, vigorous, uncompromising Pole.

Nor were the nunneries of this period more favourably judged of by our *Laski*, not even those of the mildest ritual, such as we meet with in the Beguine houses of that day on the Lower Rhine—communities whose members, without any kind of vows binding them for life, led in ordinary houses a devout life, in simple unpretentious domestic order. In the neighbouring Groningen there lived in the first residence of the Beguines the daughter of an ancient and distinguished Groningen family as a *domicella mantellata*—i.e., one belonging to the leading division of the house—the intellectual, pious *Gertrude Syssinge*. *Laski* had formed her acquaintance, and was in epistolary correspondence with her,—a correspondence which

* Kuyper, ii. 577.

the educated Beguine knew how to conduct in the Latin language, while at the same time so well versed in domestic labours that her spindle and loom were no strange occupation to her. *Laski* urges upon her too to quit the community in which she lives; his house in Emden shall be a place of refuge for her. More instant becomes the pressure as the din of war threatens to advance to Groningen. "God will not forsake thee, wherever thou art, if thou wilt only follow Him in truth and with thy whole heart; and I doubt not of thy willingness. I will not fail of affording thee a stout protection in the time of need." In a further letter* we meet with yet more urgent language: "Though I cannot, and will not, be lord and judge of another's conscience, yet I do not comprehend how any one who has any knowledge of the truth, and knows the mysteries of ungodliness in the convents, can justify his conscience before God if he remains in the midst of those of whom he daily sees and hears that the merits and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ are dishonoured by them." The ultimate decision was longer delayed in the case of our Beguine than in that of the Bernardin monk of the convent of Aduard; many a devious step, which cannot be followed by us here, was made with hesitating foot by the maiden before she quitted the threshold of the cloister for ever. Those who in their convent days had not been far from each other now found themselves for the rest of their lives united under the same roof: in 1547 *Hardenberg* led home his

* Kuyper, ii. 562. See the whole history in Spiegel, *Hardenberg*, pp. 91—105.

"*Trutje*"* as companion for life to his Bremen pastorate.

The two years of waiting which passed away in Emden before *Laski* obeyed the call to throw himself with vigour and decision into the course of events did not flow on so smoothly and quietly as he may well have wished. Visits were made from time to time to the neighbouring border district of the Netherlands. A brief stay in Amsterdam brought him many a tempting offer. A journey to his old home-land, the beloved Poland, falls likewise within this time of waiting. The occasion is a painful one. A few years before this, the important action of his renowned brother *Jerome* and his tragic experiences had already produced a deep effect upon the life of our friend : we remember with what unflagging zeal our *Johannes* had set all things in movement until he had freed his beloved brother from the disgraceful bonds into which the aspirant to the throne of Hungary had cast him. This shameful treatment on the part of one for whom he had sacrificed everything, and who owed almost everything to him, had driven the deeply injured Pole into the camp of the other pretender. His whole endeavour was henceforth directed to obtaining at last healing and peace for the fair Hungarian land, bleeding as it was from a thousand wounds. And he honestly worked to that end. Kaiser *Charles* himself bears witness in a letter to *Jerome*, which is still preserved,† what an essential part *Laski* had

* Thus the Christian name Gertrude appears in its local colouring in the only address of a letter which is preserved ; in the Latin letters *Laski* himself always calls his friend Drusilla.

† Printed in the *Kerkhistorisch Archief* (Amsterdam, 1855). p. 171.

taken in putting an end to the conflict of years between the two claimants to the throne, and in the concluding of the peace between *Ferdinand* and *Zapolya*. This peace had been effected without the knowledge or consent of *Soliman*. No one but *Laski* was thought sufficiently adroit, and at the same time courageous enough, to go to Constantinople and communicate the tidings to the redoubtable *Soliman*. The valiant Pole undertook the embassy at the peril of his life. He fearlessly braved the insults of the enraged Sultan ; war was declared, *Laski* imprisoned ; his nose and ears were to be cut off. A fortunate accident alone preserved him from this horrible mutilation, and opened to him the possibility of return.* So great and unselfish was the devotion of the Pole to the welfare of Hungary, that, despite the danger to which he had just been exposed, he declared himself ready in the following year (1540) to return to the den of the lion on a new and equally perilous embassy. What gave rise to his second journey was this : *Zapolya* had died (at the age of fifty-three) ; a few weeks before his death his youthful wife, *Isabella*, the beautiful daughter of the King of Poland, had presented him with a son. This birth kindled afresh the old desire for the government on the part of a few of those who had remained faithful, and led to their forgetting the definite arrangements made in the treaty of peace. A messenger hastened to Constantinople to place the heir lately born under the protection of *Soliman* ; *Laski's* difficult task was favourably to incline the Sultan towards King *Ferdinand*. If the Hapsburger

* Compare Hammer, *Gesch. des Osmanischen Reiches* (Pest, 1834), ii., p. 167.

had only waited, before declaring hostilities against Isabella, until *Laski* had accomplished his mission, and had found time to escape the talons of the dangerous adversary! The courageous fidelity of the messenger would have well deserved such consideration. As it was, the attack upon the widow, who had placed herself, with her son, under the protection of the Sultan, only kindled the fury of the wild victor, who looked upon himself as master of Hungary. War was declared against *Ferdinand*; the first consequence was the imprisonment of the ambassador. Even the enemy respected the daring man, and esteemed his great ability. A high position was offered the captive if he would enter the service of the Sultan; but *Laski* was no renegade, nor was he a hireling who places his sword and pen at the disposal of any one for office and honour. He continued steadfast through the whole winter of 1540 41. The brother in the distant Emden seems to have heard nothing thereof in those days; he supposes him to be in the vicinity of *Ferdinand*.* Slowly the winter passed away for the captive, who was shut up in the house of the Grand Vizier, and only allowed to attend mass on Sundays at the church of the Greek patriarch.† In the middle of June, 1541, *Soliman* at last entered upon the war against Hungary; his savage hordes poured forth as a devastating flood over the land, destroying everything where they settled. The poor captive was dragged with them as far as Belgrade. There in sickness he pined in the dungeon, while *Soliman* entered Ofen (Buda) as victor. He had set out unwillingly from Belgrade,

* Kuyper, ii. 554.

† Hammer, ii. 169.

for he had received tidings that the two ambassadors despatched to him by *Francis I.* had been treacherously assassinated on the Po, by bandits hired for that purpose by the Marquis of *Guasto*. One of these was *Rinçon*, the friend of our *Laski* in earlier days, who was doomed thus pitifully to end his life, while his former colleague was pining in the dungeons of Belgrade.* When *Soliman* returned from Ofen to Belgrade, he compassionately released the ambassador of his lately vanquished opponent. Crushed in spirit, worn out with his imprisonment and with sickness, *Laski* returned to his old home at Cracow. He felt the approach of death, and longed to converse once more with the beloved brother.† Upon the receipt of the melancholy tidings, *Johannes* immediately hastened from Emden to be present at the deathbed of his brother. Although the fact of his marriage and his entire secession was well known in his native land, no one sought to hinder his crossing the frontier and making his abode beside the dying man whom he had come to tend. The malady was thought to be the effect of a slow poison administered by Turkish hands, either in Constantinople itself or in Belgrade, out of fear of the powerful ambassador, in order by such a cowardly and miserable expedient to put him out of the way.

How gladly would we have listened to the conversation which *Johannes* held with his dying brother. More than one indication points to the conclusion that *Jerome* was not far from the Gospel ; and had

* Hammer, ii., p. 171 ; cf. Rapin, Anno 1542, vol. vii., Bk. 15, p. 613.

† Kuyper, ii. 30, “ ipso id [the visit] a me petente.”

only a favourable destiny afforded him greater opportunity for quiet and collectedness of mind, he would perhaps have taken the same step as his brother. *Melanchthon* was acquainted with the influential diplomatist, and is said to have delivered an oration over him.* *Jerome* found no fault with his brother either on account of his marriage or of his secession, by either of which acts he had forfeited all present position in his native land. He is not opposed to a post in a foreign land, but prays him to accept such post only on condition that, should his fatherland have need of him, and a change have ensued in the ecclesiastical situation by which he was free to live at home in accordance with his belief, he was to be released from any obligation into which he had entered, and then once more to devote his energies to the well-being of Poland.† The request of the dying man coincided with his own wishes, with his ardent love of the fatherland, a love which renders more significant and precious the sacrifice of exile for his faith's sake.

After the death of the brother our *Laski* did not remain much longer in Cracow. In the spring of 1542 he is already at Emden again. A passing notice in a letter indicates that he had held serious negotiations with the bishops of his native land.† It was his intention to make these public; unfortunately he did not carry this intention into effect; at least, up to the present time no MS. having

* Gerdes, *Scrinium Antiquarium* (Groningen, without date), p 486. This assertion will be examined in the sequel.

† Kuyper, ii. 587, 588, as also the beautiful passage ii. 30, and in general the whole letter to his king.

† *Ibid.*, ii. 556.

reference to them has been discovered. *A Lasco* supposes that the subject of these negotiations would draw forth a smile from his friend *Hardenberg*; at any rate, by means of them it had become notorious, in the other camp also, that the rupture with the old Church was now an accomplished fact. This rupture seems to have had, as its immediate consequence, the result that a few small sources of income which till then had remained to him, without molestation or curtailment, were henceforth cut off. So, at least, I am inclined to explain the statement of the unreliable Walewski; the dimensions which he gives to the affair are altogether exaggerated.*

With the death of the brother a strong tie which bound him to his native land was broken. The negotiations with the Polish bishops would suffice to convince him that no way was yet opened to the free proclamation of the Gospel in his fatherland, and only on this condition did he conceive of the possibility of returning. He laid himself out for a long sojourn in a foreign land; and, after all, he felt himself at home by this time in the kindly spot far away in the north upon the bleak coast of the sea. His health had somewhat improved, and was better fitted to contend with the inclemency of the rude climate. The passion for active labour was reviving. It was to be foreseen from the first that a nature like that of our friend could not stand long idle in the market-place once he had inwardly worked his way through all pressing questions, and the Lord had given him the stability of a fixed standpoint.

And he was not called to stand long idle; the Lord had need of him as a chosen vessel.

* *Bibliotheca* (Warsaw, 1872), p. 361.

We have already sought to present in broad outline a description of the state of affairs in East Friesland. Count *Enno* had been cut off in the prime of life in 1540; his widow, the Countess *Anne*, of the house of Oldenburg, had entered upon the government as guardian of her youthful sons. It was an arduous and venturesome enterprise, specially for a woman, to undertake the conduct of the disordered affairs of the land at such a troublous time. The Countess *Anne*, of devout, earnest mind, shrank not from confronting the difficulty; in firm and masculine hand she held the rein like that *Theda* who, seventy years before, as widow of *Ulric Cirksena*, had ruled over the land with such abundant blessing in place of her sons, not yet of age. The labour was rendered more difficult to Countess *Anne* by reason of particular circumstances. Her brother-in-law, Count *John*, a brother of the late regent, demanded guardianship of the nephews during their minority, notwithstanding the fact that, on the occasion of his marriage with a natural daughter of the Emperor *Mauritius*, he had solemnly renounced for himself and his descendants the right of succession in East Friesland, and that under letter and seal. The alliance with an emperor's daughter he had counted worth a pitiable relapse into the Church of Rome; on account of both of these recommendations he seemed to *Charles V.* worthy of being acknowledged as the feudal lord of the province of East Friesland. So much the more unworthy was he counted by the Frieslanders, who had already promised fidelity to the widow of Count *Enno*; with heavy sacrifices of money, almost exceeding the resources of the little country, exhausted as it was by the many wars and con-

tributions, they sought to purchase exemption from the burdensome sway of the regent which was to be imposed on them by force. The money, indeed, was absorbed by Count *John*; but that did not hinder him from keeping a jealous eye fixed upon the land, and unceasingly directing the attention of the rancorous Kaiser and of the suspicious regent of the Netherlands to this little corner of the earth, which in those days possessed the fair distinction of being an asylum for all those persecuted for the faith's sake. It was well that the Countess possessed in her valiant brother, the well-known Count *Christopher of Oldenburg*, a faithful adviser, a manly protector. He presented a bold front against the exorbitant pretensions of the renegade, behind whom stood, as an angry thunder-cloud, the Emperor himself.

Count *Christopher* was, like his sister, attached with all his heart to the cause of the Reformation, a goodly heritage of their pious mother. Both recognised that for the weal of the cruelly straitened land the lever of good order must be applied, in the first instance, in the ecclesiastical domain. The Polish baron dwelling in Emden was well known to them; to gain him on behalf of the Church was their most zealous endeavour. A new preacher's office was to be founded at the church in Emden. *Laski* declined the offer, pleading his defective acquaintance with the language of the country; this would be the second refusal, if the opinion of *Emmius* could be sustained.

In the place of him *Thomas Bramius* was chosen, an able, pious person, whom our friend likewise esteemed.* Count Christopher still relaxed not in

* *Emmius*, p. 916, as also *Meiners*, i. 218.

his efforts to gain so important a person as Laski for his Church. On his advice the Countess made the proposal, with the consent of the leading men in Emden, that he should undertake the oversight of all the churches of the land (*ἐφορείαν ecclesiarum omnium totius regionis*). Laski thought he ought no longer to withstand this third call; he believed he now heard the voice of the Lord. He declared himself ready to undertake the arduous office, upon the condition that as well the Countess as the whole Church should be found to have only the glory of God in view in the calling of him.* This took place in the beginning of the year 1543, "to the joy of all the well-disposed in the land," as the chronicler observes.

2. THE WORK WITH THE SWORD IN THE HAND.

As was the case elsewhere, so was it also in East Friesland. The rupture with the ancient Church was not at once so violent and striking that one might draw with clearness and distinctness the boundary line between the old which had passed away and the new which had occupied its place. It happened not rarely—and we could, as regards Friesland, prove this by examples—that in the same church the one preacher proclaimed the Gospel as with new tongues, and enthusiastically unfolded the sacred banner of the Reformation—our righteousness of grace alone, through faith in Christ Jesus—while below at the altar, after as before, the priest read his traditional mass, which ceased only when no one was any longer found ready to attend its performance. So also it was in Emden. For two decades now the

* Emmius, p. 916.

town and land had turned to the preaching of the Gospel ; that, however, did not prevent the Franciscan monks of the town—so many of them as had remained faithful to their cloister—continuing their ecclesiastical occupations according to the ancient custom. They still preached among themselves, they baptised children, gave the last unction to the dying, preserved and tended the images of the saints, exactly as though the whole of the great movement had passed over them without a trace. And there were not a few to be found who would irresolutely leave affairs to take their course, and would retain this strange indecision, this double-tongued procedure, but only to the damage of the young Evangelical Church, as was now seen. Incited by the Count *John*, and in the assured sense of having in him a well-protected stay, the monks lifted their heads somewhat higher. Of that which had been tacitly overlooked in them through long years they now boasted as a right.

The new superintendent at once manfully encountered them : their position seemed to him an anachronism. He forbade to them preaching and baptism, and issued a severe injunction that the images till then tolerated in the Church should be removed. The monks, now grown daring, withheld him. First of all, they held up *Laski* to suspicion as a stranger who sought to introduce new customs. They owed no obedience to him, the Pole with a beard reaching to his breast. The sly Franciscans knew right well the value of the card they were playing against the hated opponent, for the Frieslander is almost inaccessible to strangers, and I count it among the strongest marks of the authority of our

friend that this saying failed to have the desired effect, and that they willingly submitted to the influence of this "stranger" in the land. *Laski* wishes to convince the monks of their false doctrine in a public disputation; the monks, however, feel themselves no match for the able theologian, and know how adroitly to defer the disputation till the autumn, hoping that then their protector, Count *John*, will have returned, and will save them the trouble of the doubtful controversy.

Even among the Protestants themselves there were not a few disinclined for a decisive rupture with the papal customs. We receive a distinct impression of their opinion from a writing of *A Lasco*, published probably about this time: *On the holding aloof from Papal Services.** The interesting tractate places us in the midst of the movement of that day, and shows us for how many it had become difficult to sever themselves from the customs half understood indeed, but endeared to them from their earliest youth. Patience was demanded for these weak persons; one may even discover in these forms a Christian sense, and ought at least to let them die out undisturbed. *Laski* victoriously proves the untenable, hybrid character of such unsettled views, and lays bare the deep injuries inflicted upon the religious life by participation in a religious service which, after all, is built up without any foundation in God's Word. He appeals once in his reasoning to the beautiful words of *Calvin*, that "nothing in our lives ought to appear so dear and valuable to us, that we should for the

* Kuyper, i. 64.

sake of it in any wise defile ourselves with idolatry." Our *Laski* was animated in this domain by the sacredly earnest spirit of the Genevan Reformer, who will not make terms, but only contend for God's unsullied honour. The tractate concludes with the words: "I am ready to give heed to any counter-argument, if I seem not to have rightly treated the matter; for I seek not my own honour, which is of no moment, but the honour of Him to whom every knee must bow, now and in eternity. Amen."

It was an unwonted language which the people of Emden now heard pronounced with manly and firm decision. It was not to every one's taste; it contradicted too bluntly the traditional and now endeared practice; called for a radical change in the life, such as is heartily accomplished only by those who refuse to confound custom with the truth, and are resolved to follow the latter alone. The demand of the stranger appeared, moreover, to these hybrid beings a curtailment of their freedom; and on this point the Frieslander is firm. And yet they could not but feel that the word to which they had listened was rather an animating reference to the chain they were still dragging behind them; only the courage of faith for snapping it asunder was lacking to them. Even the Countess wavered. The timid woman saw the peril which threatened her and her people from the adjoining Netherlands, from the Kaiser himself, if she should proceed with too great decision against the monks and their godless ordinances. She wished, as the mother of her country, to have patience with the weak, as Paul enjoins; but overlooked the fact that this

right and this duty is conceded by the Apostle only to him who is strong in Christ, not to him who does not himself outgrow his weakness. The images were to remain afterwards as before, and no alteration was to be made in them. For *Laski* it was a question in this edict not of the images alone ; he saw in the feeble yielding an encroachment on Gospel freedom ; it was for him a compact wherein human considerations were allowed to make stipulations with the pure Word of God. That, however, appeared to him an abomination in the sanctuary. Openly, boldly, with all the courage of a soul which, being made free in Christ, will be only His servant, he enters the lists against the Countess. The document itself which he addressed to her we possess now only in copious excerpts*—a valuable, precious page of the Reformation time, reminding of *Luther's* invincible courage of faith, as manifested in his best products. *Laski* recalls to the mind of the Countess how he had been led to accept his difficult post under the conviction that the Countess was a God-fearing woman, and eager by all means to promote the glory of Christ. But he has this to charge her with—that in matters of religion she is drawn too easily to the one side or the other, and supposes she must follow rather the opinion of her counsellors than the will of God. And yet only God is the supreme Judge, even of kings, and they are called as His servants to enforce God's right, and not the ordinance of men. God requires of us to avoid idolatry ; how can we then tolerate the idolatry of the monks

* In Emmius, p. 910, from whom it is taken by Kuyper (ii. 558).

in our churches? How long are we to halt on both sides? "I am ready not only to surrender that which pertains to me, little as it is, without any regard to honour or recompense—nevertheless only upon one condition, that you, Countess, give an open testimony that you are minded to be led by the Word of God alone and to yield obedience to this. If you will not do this, but hold it more advisable to follow human ordinances and the wisdom of this world, then I can and will no longer continue my labour in your service. I am a servant of the doctrine of the Gospel and the Apostles, and I am not ashamed to receive instruction from the humblest brother; a minister of human wisdom and custom, which creeps in beside God's Word, I will not in truth be. In human things human wisdom has its place, but in Divine things God's majesty, His holy will, is before everything. . . . I know well my position. I am a stranger, have a family, have need of a settled abode, for the preservation of which I have need of benevolence, not hostility, not injury; and of a truth my aim and endeavour is to stand on terms of friendship with all, and to accommodate myself to every one's mode of life, but only *unto* the altar: to cross this limit, even from prudence in such feeling, I am not able, though I should thereby suffer the loss of all friendship, and though I should leave my family in the deepest distress and poverty; the Lord, who feedeth all things, will also care for those that are mine if I leave them nothing." He would not have thus written—so our *Laski* concludes his memorable and affecting letter—if he did not know the devout mind of the Countess;

yea, he is convinced that she understands how it pertains to his office faithfully to exhort to that which he has recognised as belonging to her own salvation and that of the Church, and that she would leniently regard even this his boldness in the letter. He would have been unfaithful if he had not thus written ; he preferred being ungrateful to being unfaithful, and hoped that, though he should less meet the wishes of others, he would at least not appear ungrateful in her eyes. He has done that to which he was under obligation, if perhaps not in an agreeable form, yet at least with an honest intention ; his labour was at the service of the Countess, but only on condition of his being free to obey God rather than men ; if this condition was impracticable, then he would demand his dismissal. He implored upon her from God His Holy Spirit, to guide her thoughts and deeds to the glory of His name and to the edification of the Church.

And God answered the prayer of His faithful servant. The Countess bowed before the earnest and reproofing words of the undaunted man ; the letter inspired her with courage, even at the risk of drawing down upon her and her poor little land the imperial displeasure, to lay aside all anxious considerations and to listen to the voice of God, as she believed she heard it in this letter. The letter which she returned to *Laski* does honour to both ; let us leave it undisfigured in its true-hearted language in the original :*—“Our salutations first of all, Worthy, Beloved, Trusty. You have lately

* Meiners, i. 249, the original Dutch in Dalton's own work.

bravely and earnestly reminded us by your letter of that which it becomes us to do by virtue of the honour of God and our government; namely, that we should put forth the idolatrous images, etc., out of our churches, after the example of many Christian kings. We have now well received such admonition, and will pray God that He may give us a heart and mind to do all that is well-pleasing to Him. As regards the images, we can suffer that you remove them out of sight by night, yet not all at once; and that the foolish folk be not allowed to be present there; but that you make the same known to the burgomasters and prelates, and that it be carried out without noise: thus is our good pleasure accomplished."

The command of the Countess was carried into execution. The monks did not yet abandon all hope of ultimate success. A few weeks after the edict their protector, the apostate Count *John*, came again to Emden, glad to have a pretext for intervening in the affairs of the little country. The Countess, however, stood firm. Even threats were unavailing; the God-fearing Reformer had inspired her with resolute courage, the sacred courage for doing God's will, and this makes a woman at any time a match for a man. Nay, even Count *John* felt the wonderful power which proceeded from Laski, established as he was in the will of God. He had an interview with him; we know only the result,—that tacitly, as though vanquished, the Count left affairs to their own course. The prop of the monks was broken. They had to submit to the inevitable. Angrily they withdrew, like old people retiring upon an annuity when the children

have grown up. To the monks was farther granted only right of asylum in the cloister ; without influence, without activity, they passed their days, little molested indeed themselves, but placed upon the superannuated list. The time dragged out slowly with them ; only after nearly two decades (1561) the last seven beneficiaries could no longer tolerate a life where on all sides another spirit was prevailing. They were portioned off, and sought out for themselves a fresh resting-place, to die in the faith of their fathers, which they could hand down to no children as heirs.

The renegade was not indeed minded for all time to lower his arms to the man who had, it is true, been able to reduce him to silence, but in whom he could not fail to recognise the strongest barrier that arrested him in the execution of his selfish plans. As to the means, one need not be over-scrupulous. So in August, 1544, there appeared, at the instigation of Count John, an ambassador from the regent of the Netherlands at the court of the Countess, to demand the expulsion of Laski as a perjured man and troubler of the peace.* It was not difficult for the accused to prove his innocence. The Countess urgently besought him not to be discouraged by such charges, and only to remain with her ; she gave the crafty brother in-law to understand that she could not dispense with the counsel and co-operation of this man. "But I know," says Laski, "that these people will not cease from their machinations until they have succeeded in driving me hence."†

* Compare Emmius, p. 926; and that which Laski writes to his friend Hardenberg with regard to it (Kuyper, ii. 581).

† Kuyper, ii. 581.

Yet not so quickly as these over-powerful opponents thought were they to succeed in the expulsion of this warrior. He proved more and more a chosen vessel of the Lord for the weal of this land. He had yet many a skirmish to sustain, in order to keep the field for his building labours clear of adversaries.

It is very interesting to witness his contest with another opponent, in those days a very formidable one. It would lead us too far if we should attempt to show that the Netherlands had for more than a century before this concealed within itself the elements of fermentation in deep and far-reaching operation—men who in devout earnestness revolted against the degenerate Church and its corrupt ministry, with inner indignation beheld the abomination of desolation in the sanctuary, and now in manifold and often strangely perverted wise meditated on a remedy, or, aside from the Church, lived out unmolested their quiet, circumscribed life, a godly one after their way. They were still reckoned in the membership of the Church, and appeared of too little significance for directing to them an attentive eye, were it only that of pastoral care; with light heart those who should have been their shepherds passed by the little, insignificant, disregarded flock. But this was changed from the time of the Reformation. The clear morning note of the Augustin monk had awakened all the spirits; the long-closed valve was set open, and with shrill sound these forces, hitherto pent up, now burst forth. They are not to be at once designated as children of the Reformation; and the faults committed by them in sanguinary and misguided fanaticism are not, any more than

the disturbances of the peasants breaking out on every side, to be laid to the charge of the Reformation. They were children of that disorderly and degenerate Church against which the Reformers raised their sacred protest, not seldom in decided insurrection against the Evangelical Church, then rising in youthful beauty, victorious in the light of the truth, above all the fermenting and conflicting elements. Most of these fermenting elements collected among the Anabaptists. It was not mainly the protest against the warrant for infant baptism which united on this point the different varieties, but rather the endeavour after a sacred communion, as an angry protest against the Church sunk in vices, which seemed to offer them in the baptism only of the regenerate a barrier against such worldliness. Seemed, but how little in reality afforded it! And what abominations of a fanaticism let loose, which runs out and comes to an end in the slime of the deepest immorality, were perpetrated behind this supposed bulwark! The blood-red infamies of the neighbouring city of Münster gleamed over even into East Friesland.

We have already pointed out that the free-inhabitants of Friesland had transformed their little country into a home for all those driven out for their faith's sake in those evil, troublous days. Nor can this hospitality be too highly lauded. In dense crowds they came, those earnest, believing forms, who had forsaken house and home and native land for the sake of their Lord and Saviour; and here sought and found a quiet spot in the asylum opened with liberal heart, where they might recover from the wounds inflicted, and live in stillness and gravity,

according to their faith. Amongst them, however, arrived others, restless, fanatical, and excited spirits, who as true enthusiasts hurried from land to land, here pining in dungeons, there again, unsubdued by all persecution, publishing their doctrine in conventicles and houses, and introducing a dire confusion among the unjudging multitude. Upon their journeyings hither and thither they gladly made a halt in East Friesland, not in order to rest, but to avail themselves of the hospitality afforded, in order to make their hosts sharers of their peculiar opinions, and that in a very manifest and imperious manner, at a time when the affairs of the Protestant Church in the land were still so little established or settled.

Ever more urgently did the regent of the Netherlands insist upon the expulsion of those fugitives who belonged to her territory. She could not bridle her indignation when she saw, on the very confines of her land, the door opened for all those for whom she had intended to leave open only the gate of the prison and the passage to the stake. Imperial commands arrived in Emden, peremptorily demanding the expulsion of the sectaries. In case of refusal the threat was held out of putting a stop to all trade with East Friesland, a kind of Continental blockade by water and land for the poor dreary little country. The threat did not fail of producing its effect, specially among the courtiers, who feared a curtailment of their luxuries. But it did not move our *Laski*, and his courageous faith imparted itself also to the Countess. He severely reprimanded the timid ones, reproaching them with being Epicureans, more readily alarmed at the edict

of an emperor than at the threatenings of God, who chastises a negligent government. "They are prepared, if God permits it, to banish sects, not for the sake of God, but for the sake of the Emperor."* Formerly there was need only of a timely mildness to restrain the people within bounds ; at that time, however, the authorities suffered anything whatever to take place ; and now they are ready to proceed with such severity as passionately to assail all strangers, without regard to guilt or innocence. *Laski* enabled the Countess to put a check upon this procedure, by requiring that, in the first place, a distinction should be drawn in the judgment between dangerous and inoffensive sects and sectaries, and only the former should be expelled. The ministers had to try the individuals ; he who was seen by them to be harmless and innocent was permitted still to enjoy the rights of hospitality undisturbed. A graceful victory of the profoundly Christian spirit of the Reformer, who feared God, and, therefore, no longer any man, even any emperor, over the intolerance of those men of the world who are prepared to bow before any kind of force.

It was an immense and toilsome labour which was thus rolled upon the shoulders of *Laski* and his colleagues. Our friend cherished the hope that, in a mild and conciliatory mood, an understanding might be arrived at with one or other of these factions. He had preserved a clear and open eye for discovering in the different sects some common property which was akin to the essential characteristic of the Evangelical Church. With the em-

* Kuyper, ii. 574.

phasising of this common possession, he thought he would be able by persuasion to bring those who were misled to the rejection of their sectarian doctrines ; the nobility of his mind, the purity of his character, might well serve as security for a favourable result. His sacred love to the Redeemer, his longing desire to avoid that division in the Evangelical Church, and to render this Church, in its compact unity, strong against the common foe—ever more threatening, because led by one mind,—inspired him with courage not to shrink from the magnitude of the labour. A man of like mind, *Martin Bucer*, had lately succeeded in Strassburg, in a similar endeavour—that of winning over the Anabaptist elements of that region, by means of kindness and conciliation, to the Evangelical Church ; why should not this also be possible to him in East Friesland ?

Among the first attempts to pave the way for an understanding was that directed to the followers of *David Joris*, one of the strangest and most doubtful leaders of sects of that day, whose adherents were numerously scattered throughout the land. The writer who has succeeded in most clearly working out from the maze of contradictory accounts a fitting picture of this painter and prophet of Delft, fiercely gleaming in boundless self-delusion, sums up the peculiarity of this extraordinary and almost incomprehensible phenomenon in the words : “ In the highest degree fired with enthusiasm, exalted above all outward distress in the night-life of the spirit—a life subject to the dominion of an overstrained imagination—and withal held in bondage at the same time by voluptuous passion ; thus, with the most remarkable mingling of the sublimest and the

basest thoughts, *Joris* begins to form his sect, in ever firmer conviction of his Divine mission. Nothing is too high, too remote, too difficult for him, in venturing the attempt to obtain recognition for his prophetic dignity. Fanatical disciples, blindly devoted to him, augment his self-confidence ; and thus he ventures not only to measure himself with different parties of the Anabaptists, but also with the leaders of the Reformation, and even with the leading secular powers of his time. It is in vain that he is visited on every side with repulse, mockery, persecution ; he arises ever more ardent, ever more fanatical, as a reformer of the world ; and ever more blindly do his partisans follow him upon the slippery path, themselves, like him, now drunk with the highest enthusiasm, now enslaved with degraded sensual lust. No toil, no danger, no persecution is shunned by the prophet, nor is it shunned by the disciples ; yet the foolhardy courting of danger does not long hold out in the case of such spirituo-physical enthusiasm, but speedily gives place to the opposite ; when the pinching poverty of the beginning has been replaced by sudden wealth, he who in any case had placed himself in the closest relation to the Christ of David disappears without a trace from the scene of the conflict.”*

All attempts to bring about a union between the

* Nippold, *Zeitschr. für hist. Theol.* (Gotha, 1863), p. 163. *Joris* passed the last years of his life in utter obscurity at Basle, where he went under a feigned name (Johann van Brugge). He assumed the character of an honest citizen, and even put on the hypocritical guise of a devout member of the Reformed Church. The sentence was carried out only upon his lifeless body which, with a more perfect acquaintance, would haply in the days of Servetus have been executed upon the living man himself.

closer adherents of Joris and the Evangelical Church proved a manifest failure ; nor was a quiet toleration of their doings in the land found to be possible. A regulation issued by the Countess in 1545 ordains that, inasmuch as the Davites (the followers of David Joris) are not to be trusted in their doctrine, it is needless to examine them before the superintendent. They are accordingly banished the land, and their return is forbidden under pain of death.

Another and more friendly form would the bearing towards the numerous Mennonites assume. As early as 1528 Anabaptists had entered the land, and had met with hospitable reception. At first they were but little noticed. They lived on in quiet, avoided all contact with the world, and were for the most part glad to rest for a while, after the persecution they had undergone in their native land. This state of matters was changed when in 1531 *Melchior Hofmann* came to Emden,—a rude, excitable, fanatical nature, who had been travelling about for the previous eight years in the character of journeyman furrier, and withal preacher. In the course of his restless wanderings he had come as far as Dorpat ; the little knot of adherents quickly gained there was dissolved again soon after his removal ; no trace of his activity has remained at this distant outpost of the Evangelical Church. Presently *Hofmann* stood at the head of the Anabaptists in East Friesland ; his messengers traversed the little land through and through, and spread his doctrine in the remotest villages. Soon after his departure to Strassburg his place was taken by *Jan Matthiesen*, who ere long played a notorious part in Münster, as the prophet Enoch. The tragedy gleamed from there,

like a bloody *Aurora Borealis*, even to East Friesland. Then it was a happiness for the Frisian Anabaptists that at their head arose *Menno*, the son of *Symon*, himself a Frieslander, and, like his countrymen, vigorous, sensible, freedom-loving. Of an earnest, sober nature, he was an opponent of enthusiasm, of fanaticism ; with great wisdom, he led the excited mind of his companions to the central point of their communion, the entire separation of the pure, believing congregation from the world—the unbelievers and the Protestant and Romish Churches, with their admixture of unbelief and immorality. The baptism of the regenerate was the mode of incorporating into this believing Church ; the strictest discipline sought to preserve the purity of the spiritual community. We have not here to show that which was false and erroneous in this separation, that of an antichristian nature which reflects itself in this life apart ; the fact must be emphasised, that this community adopted also elements that were sound and true, to which it owes its existence unto the present day.

This Mennonite congregation was in the days of *Laski* in a flourishing state. Almost simultaneously with himself *Menno* had come to Emden. The community numbered in its midst honest, quiet, rigidly moral citizens. To carry out against them the whole severity of the imperial commands, and thus to deprive the land of these its industrious, honest, quiet people, was that to which *Laski* would never have consented. He occupied towards them the enviable standpoint which Luther held in the brilliant days of his labour, when he quitted the Wartburg and hastened to Wittenberg, to quench

there the threatening conflagration. "By the Word heaven and earth was created ; the same Word must also avail here ; by the Word the world has been overcome. Therefore I will preach, speak, write it ; but no one will I compel, or constrain by force."

And *Laski* did not grow weary of dealing with the Mennonites in this truly evangelical spirit. With the consent of the Countess and the approval of his colleagues, he held a prolonged discussion with *Menno* in the presence of many. The controversy proved fruitless ; there were in particular three points on which no unity could be arrived at : on the Incarnation of Christ, on Baptism, and on the warrant for undertaking the Ministry of the Word in the congregation. Both sides, as usually happens, claimed the victory. Specially among the Mennonites was the joy of victory loudly expressed, and there seems to have been no lack of really malicious judgments regarding the Evangelical Church and its ministers. *Menno* further, during the same year, issued a letter to *Laski*, in which he treated at large of the first controverted point in their discussion. *Laski*, who till then had kept silence, thought himself called upon to meet this challenge, the more so since *Menno* had here too inveighed abundantly against him, against his companions in office, and the whole Evangelical Church, and his adherents had loudly boasted of the silence preserved hitherto, as an acknowledgment of defeat. In spite of the insulting tone of the opponent, *Laski* preserves his gentle refined repose. "I shall judge that I have rightly answered, not when I have returned invective for invective, or have exposed thee and thine, but if I have, in proportion to my little power,

in any way advanced the glory of my Lord Jesus, and have taken a step forward towards the settlement of a disputed point in a doctrine by which the Church of Christ is rent asunder, and for which surely we ought to have much greater consideration than for ourselves.”*

The controverted point played an important part in the doctrine of the Anabaptists. The Münster Anabaptists had caused a medal to be struck with the legend, *Verbum caro factum habitavit in nobis*: “The Word became flesh and dwelt in us.” The second member of the proposition was interpreted by not a few of them in a pantheistic sense; the first member served them as the main support for their much-involving peculiar doctrine: that the Son of God did not take upon Himself human form, but that the Word of God became man. *Hofmann* had already strongly emphasised the heavenly descent of the flesh of Christ; *Menno* took up this doctrine again, and sought to support it in particular on the side of the doctrine of sin. Christ cannot have taken upon Himself our guilty, curse-laden, sinful nature, and made it His own; otherwise He would not have been able to redeem us. He must have a pure, Divine humanity, not the corrupt Adamic nature, that He might be the second Adam.† *Laski* in his reply‡ sums up the opposi-

* Kuyper, i. 7.

† Dorner, *Gesch. der Prot. Theologie*, ii. 637. Compare also Erbkam, *Gesch. der Prot. Sekten* (Hamburg, 1848), p. 571.

‡ Compare Kuyper, i. 1—62. In *Calvin*, xii. 50, the statement is found, that on the advice of Hardenberg, the Archbishop of Cologne, who generally resided at his hunting seat near Bonn, undertook to have the letter printed. Hence Bonn is the place of printing.

tion in the two forms of doctrine in the words : “ This is, however, our point of difference. We, who ascribe to the Lord Jesus Christ true Godhead, and also at the same time true humanity—we say, ‘ That adorable Word, who as to His essence is from eternity to eternity God and also spirit, is still also that which He was ; but now He has in such wise for us united with the Lord Christ, after taking upon Him our flesh and blood, that He is in truth that which His name denotes, Immanuel, God with us.’ But thou teachest, the Word, which was once spirit, has, by some kind of mutation, become flesh, not, however, our flesh, but a flesh received and derived from the Holy Ghost.” *

We are too widely removed in the present day from the point of controversy to be able to experience any pleasure in reproducing the whole diffuse analysis in detail. *Laski* kept the promise he had made in the introduction. As soon as the main proposition of the controverted point was laid down, he attempted, in that earnest dignified manner which is concerned only about the subject itself, to prove the justice of his exposition, as opposed to the adverse opinion. His only weapon he derives from Holy Scripture. He does not arbitrarily separate one or other passage from the connection in order to avail himself of it for the support of his opinion otherwise reached, merely because it seems adapted to this end. With a large acquaintance with Holy Writ, he proves his view as only drawn from Holy Scripture, from Scripture in its fulness. His exposition is calm, intelligent, even as with the great

* Kuyper, i. 10.

expositor *Calvin* in a spirit of edification, from which one discovers the sacred, devout earnestness with which his spirit has been absorbed in the contemplation of the Word of God. Far from all unctuous discourse, with which more than a century after so many an otherwise sound exposition of Scripture is amalgamated, not exactly to its advantage, a language here prevails which is entirely laid hold of by the august majesty of the Word of God, and which testifies seriously, manfully, powerfully, of the truth recognised. It is a refreshment for every genuine and sound mind, a spiritual tonic, such as is afforded us by *Calvin* and the other Reformers and Church Fathers of the first rank in ever-abiding freshness.

The writing met with great approbation among the theologians of that day.* Melanchthon spoke of it in a letter to the Duke *Albert* of Prussia as a praiseworthy treatise; † nay, he commended it to *Luther* himself for reading. This he would venture to do at that time (it was in the summer of 1545) only if he were quite sure of not creating a fresh scandal for the old master by the writing thus commended. For the sacramental controversy had but lately, enkindled anew by *Luther*, broken out afresh with unexpected energy; and *Melanchthon* and his friends had long dreaded lest the vial of the terrible man's wrath should be poured out upon their heads also. What unspeakable misery would such open difference have entailed upon the Evangelical Church! *Luther* seems not to have read the

Compare Bertram, *Historia Critica Joh. a Lasco* (Aurich, 1733), p. 163.

† *Melanchthon*, v. 791.

work ; not even in his letters is any verdict pronounced upon it ; and yet one and another proposition might well appear open to question. *A Lasco* touches once or twice on that border region at which the peril of a divergence between the two manly forms in Christ would threaten ; *Luther* kept a sharp watch there, and thought he could never too earnestly warn off from the narrow frontier territory.

Originally *A Lasco* cherished the intention of treating the other two polemic writings of *Menno* with like fulness of detail. Under the pressure of other labours, which beset him on every side, he did not find the time necessary for this work, as also the wish was gradually lost. It was needless, because the opponent was lacking in the requisite preparation and thorough training for the scientific examination of such serious and profound questions ; his opinions and assertions were wanting in the necessary confirmation from Holy Scripture ; nor was he conscious of the presence of this defect. Against such incapacity even the most honest zeal for teaching is powerless.

Menno did not remain much longer in Emden after this interchange of correspondence. He was the acknowledged head of that sect which came forth chastened and purified out of the bloody persecutions, whose members were henceforth called by his name, and owe it mainly to his pious activity that they have been preserved through the days so unkindly to them, and brought into a time of greater tolerance. As a son of this more tolerant age, our *Laski* already granted them generous protection so early as the days of the Reformation. Only a few cross-grained, brawling members were banished

the land ; the bulk of them were bravely and firmly defended, even against the Emperor. Unmolested in the enjoyment of their faith, these Mennonites, specially in Emden, have lived to the present hour, quiet, peaceful folk, who preserve themselves as far as possible from contact with the wicked world, themselves no longer walking so strictly in the footsteps of their forefathers, and no longer so rigidly enforcing that Church discipline to which one day. *Menno*, almost in spite of himself, had to submit.

3. THE WORK WITH THE TROWEL IN THE HAND

We turn now to the other important part of the Reformational labours of *A Lasco*,—that which he did for the *upbuilding* of the work entrusted to him in this his second home. This part does not rise entirely clear of the other, in such wise that he would have only to build undisturbed upon the foundation laid in the Reformation : here too it was needful for him in manly resolution to open a path for himself, and with firm hand to tighten the overlax rein.

Serious times for the Church of East Friesland had just preceded ; the unsatisfactory feeling of having not yet attained to the decided entrance on a distinct and fixed direction, after making nothing but endeavours on every side, had attained its culminating point ; everywhere were seen the marks and traces of fatal irresolution, of dispersion of ecclesiastical affairs ; discipline and order were wanting ; the individuals acted as seemed good to them ; the congregations were involved in the mutation of opinions successively arising. The brave old Count *Edzard* had been attached to the Reformation with

all his heart ; the wonderful writings of Luther in his early days, and his bold standing forth in the strength of his faith, had appealed to Edzard's true Frisian nature. He who first in burning eloquence obtained from the pulpit an entrance for the Reformation, *Aportanus*, inclined in his theological views preponderantly to the side of the Upper Rhenish cities and Switzerland ; his most weighty personality firmly impressed this its stamp upon the land of his birth ; the Frieslanders felt themselves sufficiently strong and free to resist the overpowering influence of the German Reformer, and the earliest Confession of the land shows how greatly they had succeeded therein as regards the decisive main points. But after this there came ministers who had received their training at Wittenberg and had sat at the feet of *Luther* and *Melanchthon*, and who sought to carry out at home that which they had learnt. Count *Enno* indeed readily confiscated the possessions of the rich monasteries ; but he lacked the strong, earnest power of personal conviction. He preferred letting things drift as they would ; and so various currents made a way for themselves. One of these was of a kind which called for the closest adhesion to *Luther*. It coincided in point of time with the influence which Duke *Charles of Gueldres* acquired on the destiny of the land by his victory over *Enno* in 1534. Among the harsh conditions imposed by the victor was that of the restoration of the ancient Church in East Friesland ; only in the meantime the Catholic duke made the concession of resting content for the space of a year with the introduction of the Augsburg Confession and the Saxon Church order.* In con-

* Cornelius, *as before*, p. 42.

sequence of this stern decree, the Sacramentarian preachers were to quit the land ; and the strictly Lutheran Duke of Luneburg, the brother-in-law of the Romish Duke of Gueldres, was to introduce Lutheranism into East Friesland. That which the Luneburgers attempted to bring about with brusque zeal seemed to the Frisians like a gift of the Greeks ; the stranger-preachers, who were under the protection of the harsh Catholic victor, encountered a tough and prolonged resistance. The Duke died in 1538 ; and simultaneously with his death the influence of the Luneburgers came to an end. Their Church order, which had never struck root, fell to the ground ; but now the confusion became greater, and the proud sense of freedom degenerated into lawlessness. It was high time, if the much-tried little country was not to be utterly undone, that the disorder were checked, and a powerful hand laid upon the spokes of the downward-rolling wheel.

A Lasco, too, was a stranger, like those unwelcome Luneburg preachers, not, however, a stranger under the protection of a harsh Romish victor, but an exile from his native land, poor, defenceless, standing only in the armour of his Lord, for whom he had joyfully sacrificed his all. The Frisians had taken a liking to the outspoken foreigner who boldly raised his voice for the rights of the people, even against the mightiest despot who should dare to invade these rights. The radically disordered state of affairs was but too clearly apparent ; the necessity for a remedy pressed upon every one who had the welfare of the land at heart. A longing desire was felt for effecting an improvement ; and the firm confidence was cherished alike by the Countess as by her people

that the devout Polish noble, who had been living for the past year or two a quiet serious life in the land, was the man qualified for the task.

This was no delusion. *A Lasco* had recognised what was needful for the Church of the land, and, with marvellous tact, he gave to it its permanent stamp ; so that he is rightly designated the Reformer of East Friesland.

The existing troubles in ecclesiastical affairs compelled him first of all to seek the lever for his Reformational activity in the province of Church discipline. The disorders arising from a long absence of all discipline were terrible. The railing and scolding of the preachers in the pulpit ; their lives, not at all free from reproach, and sometimes even a scandal ; the widespread indifference among the congregations with regard to the schools, the care for the poor, etc., had alienated from the Church many earnest minds. They lived for a while a quiet life apart, addicting themselves only to the study of the Word of God in their houses, afterwards in due time a sure and easy prey to the Anabaptists, who observed so severe a Church discipline among themselves. *A Lasco* had a clear eye to recognise the disease. "I told the Council we should never want for sectaries so long as we were severe towards others and lenient towards the vices in our own midst. So long as they prevailed among us, we should have to make a distinction between those who submit to the Church's regulations and those who despise the Church of God and its discipline." * There arose a great outcry over such a demand ;

* Kuyper, ii. 574.

the freedom was thought to be assailed, where, after all, only limits were being imposed upon lawlessness, in order to afford protection to real freedom.

At last, however, *A Lasco* carried his point, especially in the capital of the land. He found old customs still existing, such as made for the accomplishment of his endeavour, and which he knew how to turn prudently to account. Even from the days of the Middle Ages the Frieslanders had contrived to retain a much greater share in the ecclesiastical affairs, than the Romish Church had yet been willing to concede elsewhere, among more docile peoples. The congregations had been wont from of old to elect their own preachers, whom they had been able, longer than anywhere else, to protect against the demands of celibacy. So-called churchwardens had part in the exercise of Church discipline; at synods there were to be found laymen who possessed a vote.* The consciousness of a right, nay of an obligation, to an active participation in ecclesiastical affairs, had been preserved in lively exercise. Even the Luneburg Church regulation had been compelled to respect these firmly established conditions.

Taking his ground upon this old traditional practice, *A Lasco* got it enjoined in the summer of 1544, that with the ministers of the principal church at Emden should be associated four men out of the congregation, earnest, worthy, pious people, the task being assigned to them by the whole congregation (*ecclesia*) of exercising an oversight in common with the preachers over the life of the citizens, to exhort every one to his duty, and with authority also, in the

* *Reformierte Kirchenzeitung* (Erlangen, 1870), p. 346.

name of the whole Church, to exclude those from the community who should disregard such exhortation.*

The existing distress had suggested this arrangement to *A Lasco*; it was, however, for him essentially a result of his study of the Word of God, equally as with *Calvin*. He was firmly convinced that without Church discipline there could be no true congregation of Christ.† Therefore he made his stay in Emden dependent on the continuance of this blessing-fraught arrangement. “If our people are content with the Church discipline in accordance with the Word of God, I remain their preacher; but if not, then they will probably expel me. For wittingly and willingly I will spare no one, and therefore certainly expect that they will not long tolerate me. But I leave everything to the Lord, and pray Him only for this one thing: that He will make my office subserve the glory of His holy name and the edification of His Church.”‡

Vigorously, and without being detained by the manifold difficulties and hindrances, was progress made upon the path struck out. *Laski* and his colleagues made tours of visitation throughout the land. Minute investigation was made on these journeys into the capabilities and conditions of the single Churches, their position as regards the doctrine, the life, the zeal of the ministry. When an exact insight had thus been gained into the often very sad state of affairs, *Laski* there also at once applied with vigour a reforming hand. The whole drift of

* Kuyper, ii. 575.

† So Lechler rightly brings out: *Gesch. der Presbyter. u Synodal-verfassung* (Leyden, 1854), p. 57.

‡ Kuyper, ii. 575.

his endeavour was towards the removal of all grounds of contention and the embracing of all the Churches of the land, with their ministers, within the bonds of a blessing-fraught concord, here too with all the sacred earnestness of a Reformer, who designates Church discipline the vital nerve of Church life, and regards the Church in its essence as the free and brotherly association of the children of God, designed to lead the whole human race to holiness. For this reason he directed his aim to the ordering of the life of the ministers within legal restraints ; guarding against scandals among them, deposing the unworthy from their office, and advancing sound doctrine in their midst.*

In order to the attainment of this end, he organised, with the approval of the Countess and the supreme Senate, the Preachers' Assembly, the so-called *Coetus*, without doubt the most important and far-reaching institution of *Laski*, and one which bears brilliant testimony to his Reformational endowment. It well repays us to obtain a near insight into this peculiar "synod." From Easter to Michaelmas the ministers of the land had to meet in Emden every Monday morning. The assembly elected out of its midst a president and a clerk for the whole summer-time. The sitting was opened with a prayer, offered by the president. Its language is still preserved to us,† nor is it difficult to recognise *Laski's* voice in the pithy and hearty pastoral utterances, specially when we compare this prayer with the numerous ones of his Liturgy, here-

* Emmius, p. 927.

† Meiners, i. 284. Would that such prayers might be full often heard at our convocations of the preachers !

after to be spoken of. Under the hallowed influence of such a prayer, the assembly then enters on the testing of the morals of the individual ministers. That which had become known concerning the life and walk of particular members was with fraternal unreserve discussed and thoroughly investigated. If the charges proved to be well-founded, earnest brotherly admonition followed. No one was exempt from this *censura morum*; each one was under obligation to bring forward that which had come to his hearing of an unfavourable nature; and the right was given to the members of the congregation of having such complaints as they might have to make brought before the *Coetus*. After this important point was disposed of, the assembly proceeded to the testing of the candidates for the ministry. No one was admitted to the office of preacher who could not adduce satisfactory testimonies to his godly and upright life. The candidate who was approved must thereupon deliver a brief discourse before the *Coetus*, that his preaching gift might be judged of therefrom. It then depended on the verdict of the assembly whether the candidate could be furnished with a testimony to his maturity or not.

After coming to an end with these practical matters, there followed discussions on the principal points of Christian doctrine, especially on the controversial questions of the day. The *Coetus* laid down the subjects for treatment; two preachers were appointed as opener and respondent, and their theses made known eight days before, that every one might have an opportunity of preparing for the thorough treatment of the subject.

Unfortunately the minutes belonging to the first century of its existence are lost,* an event much to be deplored. For how great would the advantage have been if we had been able to follow the early course of an institution which has preserved itself through the ages, and whence, specially in its first days, so rich a blessing proceeded to the Church of the land ! The French preacher in Emden, Pastor *Fremaut*, even in the seventeenth century testified of this *Coetus*, "This assembly serves for the preservation of concord and peace amongst the ministers and congregations. It is a good school for young preachers who have a desire for their further training ; I confess I have learnt more there than at the University."† A glance at these first minutes, however, would have also afforded us a striking picture of *Laski* presiding in the circle of his colleagues. For our friend was, as is boasted of him by East Friesland's leading historian,‡ of a candid spirit, and was wont to set forth his views, specially on Divine things, in clear and frank discourse. From the minutes still existing in his time Emmius has formed a judgment as to how *A Lasco* in these assemblies used to summon all to concord. In weighty, expressive words he declared his opinion, and confirmed its truth with valid arguments ; those who doubted or differed were calmly listened to, instructed, as also borne with when he was unable to convince them, if they only maintained peace ; and the others were taught that

* The earliest existing minute-book begins with the entry of Monday, the 18th April, 1642.

† Meiners, i. 283.

‡ Emmius, p. 927.

we must so act, in order not to break up the harmony or imperil the unity on account of a mere difference of opinion. In this way our Reformer attained, in these model synods of the preachers, the so essential supplementing—though one generally overlooked—of all Church discipline which is to be truly blessed ; the congregation saw those who, with the Church elders, were called to watch over the life and walk of the Church-members, themselves constantly subjected to earnest Church discipline.

Though not as a compensation for the lost early minutes, yet at least as a subdued echo of the theological arguments in the *Coetus*, may we perhaps regard the treatise of *Laski* on the doctrine of the Churches of East Friesland.* At any rate, this important work affords us an interesting aid for determining the theological standpoint of our *A Lasco* in those days, for which he was likewise at pains to obtain recognition in the Church entrusted to his guidance. “The only fountain-head of Christian doctrine is God, and that which He has made known in clear words in Holy Scripture. Human opinion has validity only in so far as it subordinates itself to the analogy of faith and to the Word of God. There are two main points around which the whole of Christian doctrine revolves : the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves. God can be rightly known only from the Word of God, which is Christ. He teaches us to know God as our Lord, as righteous and true and merciful. To the know-

* In Kuyper, i. 481, for the first time appearing in print, under the title *Epitome doctrinæ ecclesiæ Phrisicæ orientalis. Autore Joanne a Lasco, 1544.* Compare thereon the account by the fortunate discoverer of his painstaking researches (ix.—xii.), as also his introductory notices (xlvii.—lxxi.).

ledge of God is attached the knowledge of ourselves ; the former affords the mirror for the latter. God created man after His own image, and withal good, though, in contradistinction from Himself, with the possibility of falling. In Adam we all sinned ; from that time we are infected with original and actual sin. We have become subject to everlasting death, if we have no physician to deliver our life from the fearful and otherwise inevitable destruction. God has redeemed us in His Son, not for our own sakes, and still less on account of our merits, but only for His holy name's sake. All promises have Christ in view, and make for Him. He alone is way and truth and life, the only Mediator between God and men ; without Him no one reaches the Father. Faith is an affection of our spirit, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the preaching of God's Word, in virtue of which we believe God, love Him, steadfastly purpose henceforth continually to cleave to Him, although, by reason of our weakness, we sin ever afresh. In order to afford provision against this our weakness, God gives us means by which we strengthen and renew our faith. As such means are to be regarded the preaching of the Word and the visible tokens of His grace, whereby He seals in our hearts that which He has promised us by the testimony of His Word : two sacraments under the new covenant—Baptism and the Supper, corresponding to circumcision and the paschal meal under the old covenant." *Laski* then treats with great fulness on the subject of infant baptism, and repels the attacks of the opponents, which were so strongly and decidedly expressed in Emden.

More briefly does he discourse of the Supper on this occasion, perhaps because *Laski* felt called about this time to express himself more at large on this subject in an open letter to a friend.* The letter is a valuable document for evidencing his view on this much-controverted article of doctrine, and still more a precious testimony to the liberal spirit of our friend. *Luther* expressed himself on the occasion of the Cologne Reformation Scheme (in which, as we shall see, *Laski* was not without participation), and with reference to the conclusions concerning the Supper reached, in this document: "The book is for the enthusiasts not only tolerable, but also consolatory, much more favourable to their doctrine than to ours."† This severe judgment was shortly after (September, 1544) followed up by the much-to-be-deplored writing of the Reformer, *Brief Confession of Dr. Martin Luther concerning the Holy Sacrament*, in which he suffers himself to be carried away into the expression, "For I, who am now going to the grave, will carry with me this testimony and this glory before my Lord's judgment seat, that I have with all earnestness condemned and avoided the fanatics and enemies of the Sacrament, Karlstadt, Zwingel, Oecolampadius, Stenkefeld (Schwenkfeld), and their disciples at Zurich, and wherever else they are, according to His command (Tit. iii. 10)."‡ Of such unchristian

* Kuyper was fortunate enough to come upon the track of this letter, which was thought to be lost (cf. Kuyper, i. 557); it bears the title, "Epistola ad amicum quendam doctum scripta, dum ægrotarem, de verbis coenæ Domini, ut vocant, qui nostram de Coena doctrinam ex patrum et conciliorum autoritate impugnare, amice tamen, conabatur."

† *Luther*, lvi. 121.

‡ *Ibid.*, xxxii. 396.

rancour as was shown by the great Reformer, which spread like a fatal shadow over his immediate disciples, and rendered the greatest service to the reviving cause of the Romish Church, there is not the faintest echo in *Laski's* writing ; of the newly kindled flame of controversy no sound penetrates into the quiet of the writer ; no reproach, no accusation ; everywhere the fine sacred calm, the edification, which is wrought by dwelling in the sanctuary of the mysteries of God. He writes to his friend that there is no more heartfelt, sincere, abiding love than that which arises within us from the contemplation of the Divine gifts. It is the duty of every Christian to employ all his gifts to the glory of the Giver. But the task is not a light one, according to the old saying, "The beautiful is difficult" ($\chiαλεπά τὰ καλά$). The recognition of Divine things depends not upon the acuteness of our intellect, upon the skill of our judgment, upon the unweariedness of our labour ; all these things have their value and their place, for they are indeed God's gifts ; but they occupy only a subordinate position compared with the devout spirit, the $\thetaεοσέβεια$ (*fear of God*), as the Greeks say. . . . Firmly must we preserve in memory the doctrine of the Lord, who only acknowledges that Church as His which listens to His word. Such must be the mind of all those who will be at home in the sanctuary of the Word. For to One alone does that Divine voice refer which says, "Him shall ye hear," namely Christ ; outside of Him and beside Him there is no place for the word of the Pythagoreans, *Αὐτὸς ἔφα* ("He, the Master, said it").

But we should have to reproduce the whole

letter if we would give full utterance to the refined, pure, kindly sentiment of *Laski* amidst the din of so fiercely raging a controversy. In the further prosecution of his task *A Lasco* takes notice only of *Chrysostom*, with whom our friend manifested so many kindred traits, specially in the charming blending of intellectual perspicuity of exposition with that warmth of a devout Christian heart which, inspired and inspiring, pervades his writings. In particular the well-known eighty-second Homily on the Gospel of Matthew is cited, to show that the Bishop of Constantinople, too, at the close of the fourth century, spoke of only a spiritual receiving of the Lord in the Holy Supper. *Laski*, however, will not depend for support for his acceptance upon *Chrysostom*: "Though all Church fathers and all councils were against us, Holy Scripture abundantly suffices for making good our doctrine; upon this alone we take our stand, but upon this all have to take their stand; this alone it is which can and must allay and compose all conflicts of conscience." Nor does he regard *Carlstadt* and *Zwingli* as his instructors and authorities. He willingly acknowledges in both these men, so passionately assailed by the opposite side, the piety of their spirit, and, moreover, particularly in the Swiss, an extraordinary discriminative gift, combined with great learning; but to their doctrine of the Supper he cannot assent. The very thoroughness with which he bases his argument upon the Word of God alone renders *A Lasco* so independent of human tenets, and yet so just and considerate in the criticism of an opponent even.

In the stating of his own view there emerges even

in this earliest manifestation the favourite thought that the little words "this *is*" are not to be restricted to "bread," but extend to the whole foregoing action of the breaking, the thanksgiving, and the distribution—a thoughtful and ingenious exposition, but yet an untenable one (compare the words at the dispensing of the cup, 1 Cor. xi. 25), however important and correct the emphasising of the close connectedness of the words, "The bread, which we break." To the words of Paul, "Communion of the body of Christ, communion of the blood of Christ," Laski in the connection of the passage concedes only the passive application; so that the sense of the words is, "We, who eat the bread of the Lord in His meal, have thereby at the same time fellowship in the mystery [*mysteria*] of this bread, *i.e.*, in the body of the Lord."* "The signs of the meal are, because a sacrament, *seals*, namely, of our fellowship with the Lord; thus, if we partake of them in accordance with the institution of the Lord, they set forth before our eyes in the sacred act [*mysterium*] this fellowship with the Lord, and renew it in our souls, and seal us wholly to Him by the operation of the Holy Ghost, in firm undoubting faith, although they afford us no physical and literal partaking of the body and blood of the Lord."†

* Kuyper, ii. 560.

† *Ibid.*, p. 571. The letter on the Supper passed from hand to hand, and was read on the Rhine, in Switzerland, and elsewhere. The circulation of the aforesaid treatise was much more limited. Laski had only three or four copies made. Of these one went to Entfelder, in Konigsberg, a second, at his own request, to Duke Albert of Prussia, who forwarded it to Melanchthon; a third was sent to Hardenberg, just then staying at Strassburg, for communication to Bucer and

The treatise of which we have spoken affords us an insight into the endeavour of *A Lasco* to prepare the way, by means of the theological deliberations in the *Coetus*, for the greatest possible unity of doctrine among the ministers of the land. But this harmony in the doctrine of the ministers of the Word was intended above all to redound to the blessing of the congregation, of that part of the congregation, too, upon which the Evangelical Church from the beginning had bestowed special attention, namely the school-children.

East Friesland early enjoyed the blessing of good schools. The main labour indeed of the "Brothers of the Common Life" had been to reform the schools of their time; and our little country was too nearly adjacent to the home of these Brothers not to receive, as at first hand, their beneficial influence in this domain. As early as the time of the great *Edzard* there were schools even in the hamlets; and the first evangelical preachers of the land, for the greater part trained among the Brothers in Zwolle, Deventer, Groningen, entered right earnestly on the work of education. *A Lasco* followed in their footsteps. The celebrated police regulation of the Countess *Anne* in the year 1545, upon the framing of which the superintendent and confidential adviser of the Countess had exerted so vital an influence, determines what is needful with regard to the schools.

Bullinger (Kuyper, ii. 569, 572, 575, 765). The verdict upon it was not favourable either in Wittenberg or even in Zurich (Gabbema, p. 59; *Melanchthon*, v. 574, 790). Laski was guided by the counsels of his friends, and the work did not appear in print. Only now, after an interval of three hundred years, it has fortunately been discovered in its hiding place and incorporated in the complete works of *A Lasco*.

"We will have you pastors and Church officers earnestly exhorted that you exercise a diligent oversight over your home-staying [*hussitende*] poor, born in and inhabitants of your town, village, or hamlet, who are ashamed to beg their bread, and by reason of age and infirmity are not able to earn anything with their hands; where also the parents have children who are of five or six years of age, that they be put to school, in order to learn the Creed, the Ten Commandments of God, and the Our Father; if the parents oppose this and are not willing, they shall be compelled to go by the magistrates and officers, whom you will inform of it; and the school-fee, if so be that the parents are unable to meet it, you shall pay out for them. And when they have learnt the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed, and have become old and strong enough, both boys and girls, to earn their own livelihood, they shall be put to a trade or service and not permitted any longer to beg at home. If the parents shall not be willing to let their children be put to a service, this shall be made known to the authorities, that the parents may be punished for such neglect. Nor shall any assistance be given to such parents as have not placed their children in a service, each according to his strength and opportunity. If also it is found in truth by the pastors and Church officers that among the poor children there might be one, two, or three who have been gifted by the Almighty with a special understanding, they shall, at the expense of the town, village, or hamlet, with the help of the congregation, be kept at school, and remain until such time as they are old enough to obtain a post to teach, and it is

thought advisable to send them abroad to other schools ; that it shall then be made known to the authorities, in order that they may be furnished again with the necessary expenses." *

The main object of these schools is stated to be the teaching of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed. These are the old, well-known subjects of Christian instruction. The framing of the words leads to the conclusion that at the time of proclaiming this regulation (1545) *A Lasco* had not yet prepared a Catechism. The need for it must, however, have become more pressing from day to day. The publication of his *Epitome of Christian Doctrine* (in the previous year) might, it is true, to some extent meet the want for a time, so far that at least the ministers had a common leading-thread of doctrine ; inasmuch, however, as the work was not put into print, the publication of a Catechism was the more urgently necessary. *Laski* applied himself to the task in 1546, in common with his brethren in office, yet in such wise that he is to be regarded as the veritable author, and accomplished the same with considerable ability. The circulation was at first only in a manuscript form. It was ordained that on the Sunday afternoons the ministers should preach on this Catechism in regular order, in such manner that twice during the space of a year the whole contents

* Bartels, *Abriß einer Geschichte des Schulwesens in Ostfriesland* (Aurich, 1870), p. 7. We have, on account of its importance, extracted the whole passage. Bartels with justice calls attention to the fact that we have here one of the earliest instances of the compulsory enforcing of school attendance. It is, moreover, important to notice that the whole of the parish is under obligation to provide for the school, as also to observe the additional help on the part of the authorities in the case of children particularly gifted.

should be expounded to the congregation and impressed upon the minds of the school-children. The reasons which the *Coetus* assigned, ten years later,* for such arrangement were already appropriate in 1546. With all earnestness the ministers desire, for the hallowing of the Sabbath, to explain the Catechism at the afternoon services, in order to gather a congregation of God and to instruct the same from youth, yea from childhood, in the will of God in Christ Jesus, and thereby to preserve them from the vanity and lust of this world.† Of those manuscript copies not one has been preserved to us ; the work would consequently have been lost had not *Utenhove*, the friend of our *Laski*, prepared for the use of the Church of the Foreigners in London a Flemish translation, which was printed in London in the year 1551.‡

The very lengthy Catechism—it contains two hundred and fifty questions and answers, the latter often of such extent that the thought of acquiring them by heart must be abandoned—is divided into four parts : *The Commandments* (1—103), *Faith* (104—193), *Prayer* (194—214), *The Sacraments* (215—250). This division is the old, frequently employed one. It would be interesting to learn what led *Laski* to abandon the division of *Calvin*, who inserted in his Catechism the Doctrine of the Word of God as a chapter between the Doctrine of Prayer and that of the Sacraments,§

* Kuyper, ii. 496.

† *Ibid.*, ii. 496.

‡ On its origin, as also on the relation of the London Catechism to that of Emden, compare the masterly examination of Kuyper, i., lxxxi.—xcviii.

§ Compare on this peculiarity, passed over in this and other Catechisms of the Reformation, Von Zezschwitz, *System der*

and yet not to select the division into three parts which is foreshadowed in the ordinance of the preceding year, and which also has been adopted in so independent and model a form by the Heidelberg Catechism. Even in London the necessity was felt for making an epitome of this Catechism—a work which was entrusted to *Micronius*, one of the preachers there.* The Larger Catechism is reduced to forty-one questions, by the method of an independent treatment, which does not reproduce with verbal fidelity the common points—of such scrupulous bondage to the text of a confessional writing nothing was known in the great free days of the Reformation—but yet is in full harmony with the mind and spirit which pervades the Larger Catechism. The strong, distinct sense of this unity easily and readily broke through the restraints of exact agreement in form, everywhere life gushing fresh from the fountain-head, which ever afresh reproduces itself in a new form, with joyous creative delight. The epitome was not designed to supersede the further study of the Larger Catechism; it formed only a sort of porch through which the children had to pass, in order to be led and incited to a deeper and more thorough apprehension of the truths of salvation.

With the same end in view, the Emden ministers

christl-kirch. Katechetik (Leipsic, 1864, *seg.*), ii. 298, whose confessional standpoint unhappily prejudices his splendid work; in the reviewing of non-Lutheran Catechisms he is not able in all respects to do justice to them.

* It has rightly been received among the writings of Laski (Kuyper, i. 478, in the Flemish language). It is found admitted a second time, now in the Latin language, in Laski's *Forma ac Ratio* (Kuyper, ii. 127). The two texts do not verbally agree.

also, in the year 1554, were led to the framing of such epitome. With much acumen has the meritorious editor of *Laski's* collected works pointed out that this book, though in the fine preface addressed to the ministers of East Friesland it professes to be the fruit of a common labour, must nevertheless in the main have proceeded from the pen of *Laski*.* The Emden compendium, with its ninety-four questions, is more full than the London one ; it proceeds even more freely and independently in the reproducing of the material, as is rightly observed, in evidence of its having been composed by *Laski*, inasmuch as the author of both works can move more easily and unimpeded than a stranger, who seeks, in a loving spirit, to reproduce in a condensed form the material at hand.

A very important place in the literature pertaining to this subject is taken by the Catechism of our *Laski*, specially in the Emden compendium, which for long, long years was the authorised Catechism in East Friesland—a precious possession, in which generation after generation found its edification and the armour of its faith. It wrought with deep and decided effect on the life of the people ; it was found, along with the Bible and the Psalm-book, in every house, and that not as a piece of ancestral lumber, lying, neglected and covered with dust, in a corner, but rather in the living possession of the individuals. In the church on the Sunday afternoon the minister of the Word expounded the book ; at

* Kuyper, i., xc. seq. The text itself bears the title, "Catechismus, effte Kinderlehre, tho nütte der Jöget in Ostfriesslandt dorch de Deners des hilligen Godtlichen Wordes tho Embden, uppert korteste vervatet" (in Kuyper, ii. 496 f.).

home the father of the family instructed his household in the Confession of his Church ; and the teacher in the school began early to imprint upon the minds of the children that which they would one day have to confess, in order to take their place as true members of the congregation. For only he was allowed to attach himself to the Church and to participate in the Supper who could accurately answer the questions of the Catechism.* This was an earnest, salutary discipline, without which a vigorous living Church, which can also suffer for its faith's sake, never will arise or continue. For a Christian congregation is not a combination of thousandsfold opinions and views about the truth ; it is the steward of the mysteries of God, which it preserves in its common confession, to which confession, as to the truth of God, all those submit themselves who are living members of this congregation. The high estimation which the Heidelberg Catechism acquired after the lapse of a few decades, in swift and well-merited victorious course, in almost all lands of the Reformed Church, forced back the Emden Catechism from the foreground ; there remains to this, however, the undisputed glory of having essentially affected the presentation of particular points in the younger standard work.†

It was *Laski's* intention to explain and establish,

* Kuyper, ii. 135.

† Seisen, *Gesch. der Reformation zu Heidelberg* (Heidelberg, 1846), p. 177 f., presents such a comparison of single questions, from which the profit is strikingly apparent. Sudhoff, *Olevianus und Ursinus* (Elberfeld, 1847), p. 89, enters more in detail upon this work of comparison, but neither does the extent to which he carries it correspond to present requirements.

in a *Book of Church Order*,* the different institutions for the bringing about of a Church life governed in accordance with evangelical principles. He was not able in Emden, amidst his toilsome labours to conquer for his institutions a right of nationality in East Friesland, to execute this purpose ; not till much later, and after the wider experiences which he made in this domain elsewhere, did he obtain the leisure for this important work ; we shall only hereafter be able to speak in detail of this his most ripened labour.

Yes, it was a toilsome labour to prepare the ground in East Friesland for these so blessing-fraught Church regulations, and to get them to take firm root. He had need of summoning up all his great power of faith, in which he pursued the work, as a charge committed to him by God, with enthusiastic devotion, all his gentleness and patience in conjunction with an immovable steadfastness of conviction, in order not to become paralysed, and to stand manfully against all the fierce assaults of the adversary. Our friend often thought he would have to quit the place of conflict, and he was inclined to follow this or that call into other lands; for one thing he was firmly resolved on, that he would in no wise enter into negotiations with the opponent at the cost of the surrender even of a single point of that which he had recognised as Divine truth.

The features of one part of the opponent are not unknown to those who have looked upon the conflicts of *Calvin* in Geneva. They are the full

* Kuyper, ii. 575.

faces of the men of the world—*Epicureans* they are called by our earnest warrior for the honour of God*—by whom every hindrance in the way of the ordinary comfortable life is counted an offence, and who will be limited in their pleasures by no discipline based upon the Word of God. These people were present also in large numbers in East Friesland, emboldened by the disorder and licence of recent years in the ecclesiastical domain, and confirmed in their views by the doings at the neighbouring court of the Netherlands. Incapable of proceeding with serious solid weapons against those who, in the power of true faith, fight the good fight, they become the willing, and therefore not unsuspecting, attendants at the disposal of those who, from earnest conscientious conviction, believe themselves bound to couch the lance against such regulations.

Such opponents likewise arose for our friend. So long as we are not convinced of the contrary by distinct testimonies, we refrain in connection with these opponents from calling in question the sincerity of their convictions ; however, greatly, even to the present day, we bewail the conflict, for the sake of the Evangelical Church. We have already more than once referred to the different ecclesiastical currents which had found a way for themselves in the little land during the most recent years, and that even in the changes of its political destiny. The Luneburg period, with its zeal for enforcing the pure Lutheran doctrine, had not passed away entirely without a trace ; in one or other Church a

* Kuyper, ii. 574.

pastor had remained who was a faithful adherent of Wittenberg, and felt himself conscientiously bound to enforce his view from the pulpit and in society, apart from the question whether quite a different tendency had been followed by his predecessor and favoured during past years by the congregation. No fixed Church order prevented such undertakings. So long as the mild operation of the *Wittenberg Concord* continued in the German lands, the divergent tendency did not appear in a harsh form in East Friesland either. But, owing to *Luther's* hostile bearing in his last days, the unhappy controversy on the Sacrament, which for a time had only glowed in its embers, was now stirred up to fresh vigour, and the lurid gleam shone forth on every side. Even in East Friesland those who travelled in the old Luneburg ruts felt themselves called upon to come forward as guardians of the imperilled doctrine, and to proceed against the new presbyterian constitution. Their spokesman was the preacher *Lensisus* in Norden, a native of Antwerp, who had come into the land in the Luneburg days (1536), and had occupied the pulpit, whence a decade before had resounded the above-mentioned "Song of the Supper,"* of *Hendrik Rese*, the preacher there, or, as his congregation liked better to call him, "the Norden evangelist." Three or four other pastorates, as Aurich, Strickhausen, Friedeburg, Brockmer,† joined the zealous opponent. At first these pastors resolutely refused to join in the *Coetus*; then they proceeded to an open attack upon the doctrine of *Laski*, who was

* Compare p. 229.

† Bertram, *Historia Critica Joh. a Lasco*, p. 209.

cried down as a Sacramentarian, a very significant party cry in those days of excitement. An injunction from the ruler was issued to the negligent pastors, requiring them to attend the *Coetus*. To this, however, the malcontents did not yield obedience. They knew that they could count upon no small number of adherents among the courtiers of such as were dissatisfied with the Church discipline, who would afford them the desired support in their opposition to the irksome and so serious disciplinarian. The controversy was further prolonged in writing; unfortunately the documents relating thereto have been lost. As to the form in which this controversy was conducted by *A Lasco* we have many a fine proof in the numerous passages from letters of those days. Only one instance here. He writes thus to his friend *Bullinger* at the most trying hour of these assaults: "Pellican's son has seen here the form of our Church life, not yet reduced to order; and has a witness of the passionate opposition of some who venture to introduce confusion into the harmony of our doctrine. I believe that such people have been associated with us in order to exercise us, and to render us apt to defend the true doctrine. We seek to overcome our antagonists so far as possible by kindness and patience, and implore for them a better perception."*

But *Laski* was inexorable where it was with him a question of the central point of his doctrine. He knew well that, by the men of the world in particular, his demand for Church discipline was most reluctantly

* Kuyper, ii. 595.

endured. “The real ground of all attacks, I know, is no other than that those who till now thought they could indulge in anything they liked, without any law, will not now submit to be censured and called to order by us. And yet this must be done, if I am to be true to my office. That which is, however, for me the most certain of all, is that I am the servant of Christ, against whom the world and the devil make their attacks with so much eagerness ; and I thank God my Father, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer, that He places me in such a school ; and I pray Him only that He will enable me, whether in life or in death, to glorify His name.”* To his friend *Hermann Lenthius*, secretary to the Countess, he pours out his overcharged heart during this most troublous time in fine and manly lines : “My Hermann ! I must almost think it is out of hatred to me that I am not suffered to make any progress in the Church domain. For what in all the world has been advanced during the whole time of my holding office, save a greater unity in doctrine ? And now some undertake, as I hear, to bring this again into confusion. If the Countess or the magistrates or any one else deems me to be useless or unfaithful in my office, let such an one only say to me the single word, Lay it down ! If the Countess has not the matter at heart, and she thinks that it belongs not to her office to advance true religion within her territory, what need has she of my service ? Truly I will not be the servant of these magistrates, whom I see devoid of all piety. I had set my hope upon the Countess, who also has detained me here ;

* Kuyper, ii. 588.

but even her I see relaxing, and if she does not soon manifest other proofs of her zeal for religion, I shall be compelled to believe that which I would fain not believe. I, at least, my Hermann, will not be a contemned minister of the Word of God. If others will tolerate in their office that the dignity of the Word of God be exposed to contempt, I must indeed endure this ; but that, out of hostility to me, the authority of the Word of God in my ministry be despised, I cannot in truth endure. Is it not a disgrace that I cannot get a just consideration to be had for the poor, or obtain the removal of the images, the worship of which we have to witness with our own eyes, as in mockery of our administration ? Our business is, so I hear, only to preach. To this I reply, that we have not at all to preach to swine and dogs, *i.e.* people who vomit anywhere their ill-digested food. Through all these years there has been preaching ; what result of that preaching can now be pointed out ? We see practised, after as before, the open abominable idolatry of the monks ; and no one is permitted to interfere with it. We see every kind of Church discipline abolished and suppressed. We see almost everything plundered and scattered which was destined to the maintenance of the public ministry and to the encouragement of study. We see an asylum for all sects ; the gnats among them we have pursued, the wasps and hornets we feed, and the ravens we leave unmolested. Nay, we see such leniency towards vice, that he who only lives a little more continently is looked upon as a sectary. These are the visible fruits of the Gospel now already so long preached among us, and yet it is still constantly said to us, 'Only preach.' We

are to teach—so I am told—that the images are no idols. But shall we advance this to those who make the weal of the fatherland turn upon the preserving or the removal of the idols? What greater idolatry is there than the tenet that everything is secure so long as the images are retained, but that the country goes to ruin when they are removed? Can the images effect so much, that their preservation is our protection, their removal our ruin? Is not all this impiety, nay blasphemy? And in connection with this, still to assert that no one worships the images! If that is not to worship them, what in the world *is* image-worship? But I must close; nor can I say more for sadness of heart and weakness of body. But this I could wish, my Hermann, that thou wouldest admonish the Countess in a private interview, and that right earnestly, regarding her duty. For this is settled with regard to me: if I do not see other signs of piety in the Countess, you will not much longer have me.”*

Our warrior was thoroughly in earnest with this threat. He waited patiently for a few more months; but as he observed in the pastors neither the unity of doctrine for which he had laboured, nor the maintenance of any kind of discipline among themselves, and also found the magistrates slothful in this respect, he laid down his office of superintendent at the spring of the year 1546,† remaining but as simple pastor of the great Church at Emden, and this only upon condition that he should be allowed perfect freedom of action there. This state of

* Kuyper, ii. 596.

† It must have been at the end of February or beginning of March. Compare Kuyper, ii. 602.

matters certainly could not last long. Everybody knew what a serious loss the Church had suffered by this resignation. It had just begun to gain strength, to enjoy the abundant blessing of such vigorous oversight ; and now the tried hand was wanting at the helm. As early as the month of May negotiations are opened. Only if there is a willingness to follow the Lord *with both feet*—in this case alone will our friend, to the best of his ability, serve the Church of the land. By the middle of June the negotiations had been brought to a prosperous conclusion ; * silence was imposed by the Countess upon the passionate opponent *Lemsius* ; participation in the *Coetus* was enjoined upon all the ministry, under pain of deposition ; no preacher could be inducted into his office without having by his subscription given consent to the doctrine of the Church. The malcontents bowed to the stern edict of authority ; they were not disposed to pay for their views the price of the resignation of their office. Neither had they, it is true, any wish to make a full surrender. That which was refused them in the land they sought to obtain by means of pressure from without. From Bremen, Hamburg, Brunswick, and Wittenberg, still mourning over the new-closed grave of *Luther*, they collected verdicts against the Reformational work of *Laski*. Without effect. “The truth is unconquerable, and yields not to human wisdom, even though the whole world should sink in ruins” (*etiamsi fractus illabatur orbis*), writes our friend to his classically educated *Hardenberg*.†

* Kuyper, ii. 607.

† *Ibid.*, 608.

The report of that which the Church of East Friesland, under the oversight of *A Lasco*, strove after, and gradually became, spread far and wide, and, among other places, to Geneva. With lively interest, *Calvin* was witness of a development which was so closely akin to his own endeavours. He had received intelligence of the formation of the *Coetus*; some ministers belonging to it had invited him to write a Catechism for youth; the Genevan Reformer complied with the request, and dedicated his Catechism to the ministers of East Friesland.* Within wide circles men spoke with warm ap-

* Compare *Calvin*, vi. 7. The date of the printed dedication is December, 1545; in a MS. form it was received in Emden as early as July, 1545, as Laski's friend Gerard, at Camph, writes to Bullinger (compare *Calvin*, xii. 154). The need of a Catechism was at once felt as soon as Laski had begun to accomplish his work of reformation; the unfavourable judgment on his *Epitome*, sent out only in manuscript, had made him hesitate about proceeding at once to the publication of so great a work (how great a work it was in the estimation of the Reformers is admirably illustrated in Calvin's dedicating his Catechism to the ministers of East Friesland, as though he would encourage A Lasco to lay aside his hesitation); Calvin's Catechism was now presented, not indeed to fill up the blank so painfully felt,—for no evidence exists to show that it was intended to introduce this Catechism to East Friesland—but perhaps to serve as a pattern in the preparing of one of their own. Calvin's Catechism may serve as an evidence to what extent even main points of doctrine must recede into the background when we have to lead youth of tender age, in accordance with their capacity, into the truth of salvation. Calvin sought by the publication of this Catechism to efface the remembrance of his Catechism of 1537; in this he was so successful that the indefatigable explorers Reuss and Baum could discover no copy of the French original for their standard edition of Calvin's works. Only in 1878, by a piece of good fortune, a copy was brought to light in the National Library at Paris, the reprint of which has been enriched by excellent introductions on the part of Albert Rilliet and Theophile Dufour (*Le Catéchisme Français de Calvin* (Genève, 1878), pp. cclxxxvii. and 143).

probation of that which was done in East Friesland ; the Church there exerted a strong power of attraction, specially upon the neighbouring lands ; and just the flower of the younger energies desired to be received into the communion of this Church.*

4. THE REFORMER IN HIS PRIVATE LIFE IN EAST FRIESLAND.

They are but scanty accounts which we have been able to glean regarding the private life of our friend, with difficulty, and often from quite out-of-the-way places. In those days people were very sparing of such communications ; behind the mighty events upon the world's stage the private life even of the most prominent actors retired into a modest background ; their home, however dear and cherished it might be to them, appeared to the men themselves too little for becoming the subject of much talk, as compared with the sublime tasks of their public life. Only here and there at best a hurried notice, almost as by accident, in a private letter to a friend ; and then generally occurring in so cursory and disconnected a form, as to fail to satisfy the larger claims of our time which are made in this respect also. This is no reproach against that great age, only a regret at the perhaps excessive demands of our own day.

We know already that in the history of *A Lasco*, as of others, the first public indication of his final rupture with the Romish Church was marriage, in his case with a burgher's daughter of Louvain, whose maiden name is unknown to us. That step, so eventful

* Kuyper, ii. 595

for the Evangelical Church, was taken by almost all the Reformers and preachers of the Gospel ; the beginnings of the evangelical parsonage, and therewith the sources of a deep and abundant blessing for the whole Church life of after-ages, stand quite close to the rise of the Reformation, and are most intimately connected with its whole character. This bond of plighted fidelity lasted only twelve years. In 1551 there appeared in London the first traces of consumption, probably a consequence of that putrid fever which so fearfully raged about this time in the city of the Thames. A year later the sufferer succumbed to her ailments in a distant land. *A Lasco* loved her tenderly ; her decease deeply crushed him ; the grief for her imperilled for a moment his own health, at best but delicate. He calls her the other part of himself, which death has snatched from his side ; and praises at once her piety and the integrity of her whole character.*

The marriage union had been richly blessed with children ; his first child, the little daughter *Barbara*, we have already saluted on a visit to her grandparents ; † in 1558 we meet with her again, this time in Cracow ; she and her younger sister *Ludovica* were then both betrothed. ‡ Greatly gladdened was *A Lasco* in 1546 by the birth of a son. After the lapse of a quarter of a year the child died, at a time of great physical suffering on the part of our friend. "He has gone beforehand to Christ, and we shall soon follow him, if God will ; for my sickness is to me a sure sign that I have to forsake my dwelling-place here upon earth,

* Kuyper, ii. 675.

† Compare p. 217.

‡ Gerdes, iii. 140.

in order shortly, as I hope, to be with Christ." * There remained to him two sons of this wife, *John* and *Jerome*, in whose names, as in those of his two daughters, are preserved loving family memories of home. When the two youths had so far advanced as to stand in need of a thorough education, he took into his house an able tutor, *Wingius* (Godfried van Wingen).† At the time of the shameful expulsion from Denmark of which we shall afterwards have to speak, these two youths, with their tutor, were nearly losing their lives in the ice-packs ; having been at first allowed the right of wintering in Denmark on account of their tender age, but afterwards, in the midst of the severe frost, being obliged to share the lot of the others.

When *A Lasco* removed with his young wife from Louvain to Emden in 1540, he dwelt during the first years in a private house. He did not think that his enfeebled bodily condition would be equal to bearing for a permanence the discomforts of the damp, raw climate in these storm-lashed flats of the Ems, combined with the dreariness of the humble, almost indigent dwellings ; and for a long time he was on the point of removing to a more healthful region. But none presented itself which would have offered the same fair assured right of asylum for his

* Kuyper, ii. 609.

† See Bishop Grindal's testimony to this faithful and learned man in his letter to the magistrates of Frankfort, 12th November, 1561 (*Remains*, p. 250). We find Wingius after his return from England and Denmark again in Emden, whence (1558) he sends his greetings to *A Lasco*'s "most sweet children." He is at Frankfort in 1561, and succeeds P. Deloenus as pastor of the Dutch Church, London, in 1563. Two interesting letters from him in the *Appendix* to Pyper's *Jan Uttenhove*, Leyden, 1883.—TR.

faith. As soon as he had at length yielded to the requests and become superintendent of the land, a place of residence was assigned to him in the Franciscan cloister, which by its solid walls could afford him better defence against storm and cold. In the conflicts of the first years he often felt as though he would have to quit the land, and every thought of acquiring a home of his own remained foreign to him. But when the last grave attack of the opponents, with a view to driving him from his office, was victoriously repelled, and therewith was presented a better-founded hope of his continuance in the land, he resolved—it was in the autumn of 1546—to purchase for himself a small country estate in the neighbourhood of Emden.

Not far from the road which leads from Emden to Aurich, close to Loppersum, lies the farmstead of Abbingwehr, a simple country-house, with outlying arable and pasture land. Four thousand five hundred dollars was the price of the estate.* *A Lasco* was unable to pay down the whole purchase money himself. We know that though born and educated amidst the most brilliant surroundings, he quitted his Church and country in poverty. A small legacy had indeed come to him from his brother; but this too had been curtailed, by the dishonesty of a relative, to such an extent that at most barely fifteen hundred dollars remained to him. “What shall I

* Kuyper, ii. 609. What the size of the estate was can no longer be determined from existing accounts; the relative value may perhaps be gathered from the fact that about that time (1545) a hundred and fifty to a hundred and seventy pairs of oxen could have been purchased for this sum; i.e., a pair of oxen was worth twenty-six to thirty dollars. Compare Klopp, *Geschichte Ostfrieslands* (Hanover, 1854), i., p. 411.

do?" he exclaimed at the intelligence. "I will say with Job, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' " He was thus obliged to take up a loan, in order to meet the required amount. After much toil and trouble, the matter was so arranged that there should be several joint purchasers, in relation to whom he reserved only the privilege of freeing himself from their claim by the subsequent buying up of their shares. Here, upon his pleasant little estate, he now began to feel at home. The country air, the residence in the open grounds, the more considerable activity, proved beneficial to his enfeebled health. During the last period of his stay in the town he suffered so painfully from his old disorder, in the midst of the most arduous conflicts, that in May, 1546, he was nearly blinded by a disease of the eyes; even after this was relieved, everything was, as it were, veiled in mist. A year after his becoming a landed proprietor his health was so greatly improved, that in the cold winter days he was a few times able to make his way home from the town on foot. The faithful companion in life at home looked after the greatly augmented domestic affairs. In dairy matters she is well versed; a jar of butter and some home-made cheese are set before the old friend of the family, now become a pastor in Bremen;* it would seem that the diligent housewife was wont to send to market the produce of the field and the work of the spinning-wheel, and thus helped to wipe out the debt still burdening the estate. Quite joyfully and

* Kuyper, ii. 617.

pleasantly does *A Lasco* subscribe his letters from his country homestead, "ex regno nostro Abbing-weerensi"—"from our kingdom of Abbingwehr."

Our *A Lasco* was not indeed very well adapted for a life of parsimony. This would present a two-fold difficulty for a Pole, accustomed from childhood to a careless liberality, and our friend did not deny his nationality in this respect either. Even amidst the greatly altered circumstances which afforded him only a scanty revenue, considering his growing family, he did not forego his noble unselfishness, his large-hearted generosity. His old friend *Hardeberg* was dilatory in the repayment of a debt. "So I send you twenty additional dollars," our *Laski* writes to him; "more I have not at this moment in hand. If you should pay us a visit, we will arrange about the necessary reckoning. If I hear that you have become rich, I will demand of you what you owe me. But if not, I will add other gifts." * He confidently furnished a noble with letters of recommendation to persons in Switzerland, and particularly to *Calvin*. These letters were basely abused, and employed for the extortion of money. As soon as *A Lasco* receives intelligence thereof, he declares himself ready to make good the amount. "Be assured," he writes to *Calvin*, "that it would be in a high degree matter of thankfulness to me if I might in any way help to diminish this loss to you; let me know, if only for the sake of our fraternal love and mutual candour. . . . I can more easily bear that the hypocrite has deceived me, than that he abuses my name and even my handwriting for

* Kuyper, ii. 577.

the deception of others ; I cannot say how much it pains me." *

With this amiable unselfishness went hand in hand a touching humility in his estimate of himself. The fine confession is one of perfect sincerity when he says, "I make so bold as to serve the Church with my little talent, and implore the mercy of God, that among all the great offerings of others, He will deign also not to despise my little sacrifice, after the example of that widow in the Gospel."

All these traits of his character, and those others also which would well deserve to be brought into relief, were with him transformed and consecrated, nay even first attained to their full and fair development, by his entire self-surrender to Christ as his Saviour. This imparts to him the free, joyful courage in the presence of all men ; this confers upon him the calmness and independence in all the heavy afflictions of his changeful life. From this lofty and secure watchtower, that Christ for him was alone his Master, and the Word of God the only, but also the absolute rule of his life, of his whole thinking, he looked forth more dispassionately than so many a contemporary upon the high-running waves of the conflicts of the day, not as an idle spectator, who from a protected spot witnesses the strife, but rather with the sacred and earnest desire, so far as in him lies, to contribute to the ending of it, that only Christ and His kingdom may be advanced. A group of attractive forms arises about this time, whose whole noble endeavour is directed to the filling up of the yawning gap in

* Kuyper, ii. 650, 654.

the Evangelical Church ; we know hardly one among these heroes who would seem to occupy a more amiable, and at the same time a more prominent position in such precious work, than he. With piercing glance—the subsequent events will afford many a significant proof of this—he perceived the deep injuries of the division in the one Church of the Reformation ; in the case of no other in the progress of his particular experience of life did the sword of this separation penetrate the breast more deeply than for him, when he saw his most ardent longing for the Church and his fatherland suffer shipwreck upon this rock ; and yet he did not wish for peace at *any* price. He was closely akin in his peaceful disposition to his friend, the noble *Bucer*, in Strassburg ; but he could not always join hands with the busy man in his incessant activity for discovering formulas, for putting together words better adapted for a momentary covering of the breach than for its permanent removal. “For the terminating of this conflict in doctrine, for peace within the Church”—thus he can write to a friend with full conviction at a time when he had to endure the most grievous vexation at the hands of confessional Hotspurs—“I am and was always so greatly concerned as to yield to no one in this, but yet only in such wise that the truth may come to light, not that it may be obscured, or, out of desire of pleasing men, in any wise distorted. I will not, so far as I have any power, for the gratification of men be excluded from the number of the servants of Christ.”*

* Kuyper, ii. 699.

Characteristic of this his noble disposition are the judgments he has pronounced here and there upon the heroes of the day. Only one or two of these out of a rich abundance. *A Lasco* had spent his whole time beyond the influence of immediate contact with *Luther*. The impressions received during the social life with *Erasmus* in Basle may long have dominated his judgment as respects this heroic form of the German Reformer; and when then in ripe years he himself entered upon the work, it was, as it were, naturally ordered that he should follow that section of the Church to which the continued development of the Reformational thoughts had fallen as a fair inheritance. From the year 1543 forward, the Evangelical Church of the Reformation held its further progress of conquest in the direction pointed out and opened up by *Calvin*. Our friend likewise, in an independent spirit, followed this tendency. But he warns those of like spirit not to allow a just judgment to be obscured by partisanship. How fine is his request to *Bullinger*, whose doctrine had just been condemned again in a most vehement and painful onslaught by *Luther*, as he kindled afresh the Sacramental controversy. "In glancing through your Confession"—it is the answer of the Zuricher to the *Brief Confession of Dr. Martin Luther concerning the Holy Sacrament*—"I have found a more bitter language against Luther than I could have wished. I do not deny that Luther has given way too much to vituperations against you, and has far overstepped the bounds of Christian love; but such things must be pardoned him on account of his prominent merits in regard to the Church of Christ,

and in order that we be not dashed upon the same stone which we censure in Luther. It was enough to have shown the error which you have in my judgment fully brought out ; but there was no need for this purpose of invective, by which we effect nothing save to bring the doctrine and ministry of the Gospel in our congregations into ill savour with the opponents. In my opinion it would have been enough to say, ‘Here Luther is in error,’ or something similar, which defends our innocence if it wins assent, and still leaves the name and honour of the others unassailed.”* Accordingly when, a few months later, the tidings of the departure of that great man reach him, our friend writes to the Swiss that he hopes—alas ! how was he deceived in this hope, to his own deepest sorrow, to the most bitter experience in after-times—that after the decease of Luther an end to the Sacramental controversy would be brought about.†

Melanchthon had already shown in the altered *Augsburg Confession*, whose wording upon the decisive point Luther had tacitly allowed, what a powerful influence *Calvin* had exerted upon him, particularly since *Calvin’s* personal interview with him at Frankfort-on-the-Main in 1539. The companion of *Luther* thereby also approached nearer in spirit to *A Lasco*. We have, it is true, already noticed his censure of that writing of *A Lasco’s* ;‡ this, nevertheless, did not prevent the two men finding ever more intimate points of contact the longer they knew each other, to the enhancement of their mutual esteem. In 1543 *A Lasco* writes

* Kuyper, ii. 595. † *Ibid.*, ii. 603. ‡ See p. 280, note.

to the venerated man, "The longer I contemplate the many and distinguished gifts of God bestowed upon thee, the more do I judge that thou art the *only* one to whom I can pour out what of doubts arises in my heart. And I will do so, as with the greatest confidence, so also with the greatest candour, in the hope that, as I confidently believe, thou wilt, according to thy kindly sentiment and Christian love, give good counsel."* Ten years later, after many disappointing experiences in connection with the wavering man, his judgment sounds less favourable : "I recognise Philip [Melanchthon] in that proceeding, which is like him. I esteem his learning, I acknowledge his piety, I commend his modesty ; but I can bestow no approval upon his timid spirit" (*μικροψυχίαν*).†

It would, nevertheless, carry us too far afield if we would further extend the anthology of his pertinent and moderate testimonies concerning his contemporaries, kindly withal, even in regard to the opponent.‡ In all he leaves the impression of a man of fine culture, who earnestly wishes to do justice to each individual, and is animated by the ardent desire rather for Christ's sake to lay stress upon unity, than to fall into the man-service of party.

A Lasco was highly esteemed by the ablest among his contemporaries. Friend and opponent, so long as the opponents were not wholly blind, paid the

* Kuyper, ii. 565.

† *Ibid.*, p. 707.

‡ The following references may afford satisfaction to those seeking further illustration : on Luther, ii. 603 ; on Bullinger, ii. 568, 585 ; on Erasmus, ii. 569, 583 f. ; on Oecolampadius, ii. 576 ; on Schwenkfeld, ii. 577 ; on Pellican, ii. 582 ; on Osiander, ii. 663, 679 ; on Albert of Brandenburg, ii. 666.

tribute of a full and warm admiration of the sincerity and purity of his character ; and even where it was indeed right to refuse assent to the particular moulding and expression of his doctrine, men acknowledged the seriousness and honesty of the investigation, the dignity of the conception, the fearless, candid language, the victorious sway of a spirit which desires to be the servant of Christ alone. What he accomplished with strong and firm hand in the ruined and unruly state of ecclesiastical affairs in East Friesland, amidst so many passionate attacks, already filled his contemporaries with legitimate astonishment, and places him for us in the foremost rank of those men who have wrought with transforming effect upon the life of the Evangelical Church. His influence in this direction has not been effaced to this hour ; we have on many points to go to his school in order to be in a position to render justice to the serious demands of the present day.

The attraction of such a personality could not fail of extending far beyond the scene of his immediate labours, nor his judgment and aid of being sought in other lands. We are not here speaking of the endeavour, clearly perceptible as it was up to the year 1544, to entice him to his native land upon the condition of his return to the communion of the Romish Church, even with the bait of a leading episcopal see. “But I have so dismissed these people that they will certainly not come to me any more with this.” It is worthy of particular notice that *Laski* firmly withheld the tendency, at that time so strongly manifesting itself, to travel hither and thither and enforce one’s counsel in the most diverse places ; he can on a fitting occasion testify to his king, *Sigis-*

mund, that during a decade of years he had not quitted the place of his labour save when impelled by necessity, and had taken up the traveller's staff only when no possibility of further working was afforded him.

Among the labours on behalf of the Church of Christ, beyond the limits of East Friesland, which he could not decline, is to be enumerated in the front rank his residence with the Archbishop of Cologne, the Elector *Hermann von Wied*. An exceedingly impressive form is that of this noble Church prince, whom Ranke portrays with master hand in the few strokes : "Hermann of Cologne perceived at last, as he says, that he made no progress with these deliberations (which he held with his suffragans in the year 1536) because all was based upon human ordinance, not upon God's Word. When afterwards he approached the Scripture, from which alone the doctrine of godliness is to be drawn, he was convinced that its sense is embodied in the *Augsburg Confession*. The older he grew, the more deeply was he penetrated by the influence of this purified doctrine. He was diligently occupied in setting it forth in his life and walk. In the writings of contemporaries he appears as the good, devout lord of Cologne, as the old God-loving Elector, the excellent veteran (he was born in 1477). He was a tall man, with snowy beard ; of venerable appearance ; with an expression in which good-nature, earnestness, and honesty were prominent. After hesitating for a time, he finally resolved to do for his diocese that which, as he expresses it, becomes a man of God."* Even from

* Ranke, *Deutsche Gesch. im Zeitalter der Reformation*, iv., p. 260.

1536 the Archbishop had entered into manifold friendly relations with Protestants, gladly supported therein by a part of his canons at Cologne. To the number of these canons still belonged the brother of our Countess *Anne*, and her vigorous defender against the pretensions of her Catholic brother-in-law —*Christopher von Oldenburg*.* After the Diet of Ratisbon (1541), and rapidly availing himself of the temper manifested there, the Elector entrusted to *Bucer* and *Melanchthon*, who had both come on this behalf to Bonn, the drawing up of a project of reformation. That which serves as the basis for this *Simple Consultation (Bedenken)*, as the title reads,† is the Nuremberg Church Order of *Andreas Osiander*. *Bucer* elaborated the *Consultation*. *Melanchthon* approved of it in all its parts. This unqualified assent is an interesting instance of the manner in which *Melanchthon*, even in the doctrine of Church constitution and Church discipline, struck into the paths which had been trodden by Strassburg and Switzerland with so great and far-reaching success. It is well known that the article on the Lord's Supper, to which *Amsdorf* by a detailed judgment

* Varrentrapp, *Hermann von Wied u. Seine Reformationsversuch in Köln* (Leipsic, 1878), p. 88. This meritorious work affords the first thorough insight into the interesting attempt at reformation then made; for our purpose we could have wished for a greater reference to the part taken by A Lasco; the one slight allusion at page 199 to a passage in a letter of his is surely too little.

† Varrentrapp, p. 178. [*Einfältiges Bedenken* (1543), *Simplex et Pia Deliberatio* (Latin version of 1545). Translated into English 1547, and more correctly in 1548. Cranmer corresponded with the Elector to the time of Hermann's death in 1552 (Hardwick, *History of the Christian Church during the Reformation*, p. 59 n.; Strype's *Cranmer* (Oxford, 1848), ii., p. 397).]—TR.

drew the attention of *Luther*, furnished to the latter the lamentable occasion for reviving afresh the Sacramental controversy, hardly yet calmed down, and this time indeed with ruinous consequences to the progress of the Evangelical Church. *Melanchthon* passed days of deep concern, fearing lest the angry Reformer should perchance sever the bond of communion between the two.

This attempt at a peaceful Reformation was frustrated by the other clerical members of the Cologne chapter. While the *Consultation* afforded a precious incitement in far-off lands, the opponents within the archiepiscopal chapter itself succeeded in nullifying all its effect at home. The critical position which was now beginning for the Protestants in the empire was most decidedly favourable to their success. But the Archbishop remained faithful to his conviction ; the evangelical preachers, drawn by him into the land, possessed in him a firm protector so long as he lived. *Hardenberg* likewise sojourned at his court. Through him indeed the attention of the Elector was called to *Laski*. In January, 1545, *Hardenberg* had paid a visit to his native land, and upon the return journey had passed a month in Emden.* The two friends had for long not enjoyed such a time of intercourse. Hardly had *Hardenberg* returned to the Elector before *A Lasco* received an urgent invitation from the latter, to which, with the consent of the Countess, he yielded compliance. Manifold important subjects had the aged ecclesiastical prince to discuss with the Reformer ; of one such subject alone has the intelli-

* *Scrinium*, iii. 687.

gence reached us: the departure of the nuns from the cloister, which had assumed great proportions within the archbishopric.* Only with regret did the Archbishop take leave of *A Lasco*; he would fain have retained him altogether beside himself at a time when the state of his affairs in relation to the Emperor and the cathedral chapter was daily growing worse. He at least obtained from him the promise that he would attend the Diet at Worms as one of his counsellors.

On the 16th May, 1545, *Charles V.* arrived in Worms, and on the next day the Cardinal *Farnese*,† about the same time also, as promised to the Elector, *John a Lasco*. On the way thither he had made a stay of a few days in Heidelberg, to visit the Count Palatine, *Otho Henry*.‡ A radical change had, however, set in at Worms from the spirit which prevailed in the days of the Diet at Ratisbon (1541), or even those of Spires only in the previous year. At Trent the Council was now at last assembled; the Protestants were not invited thereto.§ Between pope and kaiser there was still a conflict with

* *Scrinium*, p. 681; and also *Spiegel*, p. 58.

† *Sleidan, Commentatorium de Statu Religionis* (Francof., 1610), p. 431.

‡ *Kuyper*, ii. 718.

§ In order to be free to deal with the Protestants, Charles had made a disadvantageous peace with France by the Treaty of Crespy, 19th September, 1544. The Council of Trent met under Paul III. 15th March, 1545. In 1547 it was removed to Bologna, where it sat for a short time. Suspended during the latter years of Paul III. and during the whole pontificates of Marcellus and Paul IV. (1552—1562), it was recalled into a brief life by Pius IV. (1559—1565) on the 18th January, 1562, and finally expired in 1563.

Upon the rout of Charles' army, in 1552, "the Tridentine Council was dispersed with equal haste, the worthy Fathers flying in all directions."—TR.

regard to the imperial competency at the Council. Already the form of the first German Jesuits emerged at Worms. The Emperor had come from Cologne to the Diet; cathedral chapter, university, the whole clergy, had risen against the Reformational zeal of the Elector, to the great satisfaction of *Charles V.* Everything contributed to cause the affairs of religion to be prosecuted only with half-heartedness; it was deemed hardly worth while to negotiate, inasmuch as every one was convinced of the outbreak of war, and each reckoned on its favourable issue. *Laski* complains in a letter from Worms of the negligent manner in which the religious affairs were discussed, and that, as might be foreseen, it was wished to postpone the decision again to a future diet,* probably in the expectation that before then the bloody die of decision would have been cast upon the field of battle. Previous to the close of the Diet, as early as the 10th of June, *A Lasco* quitted Worms, and was so intent on reaching home that he did not even carry out his intention of visiting the friends in Strassburg. The cause of the Elector was lost. In July he received a citation from the Pope to present himself in Rome within sixty days to make his defence; a like citation was received, among others, by the brother of the Countess *Anne*, the Cologne prebendary, *Christopher von Oldenburg*.† The faithful Archbishop had not long to survive the failure of his work of reformation: in 1552 he died, steadfast to the last in that which he still joyfully confessed in departing to be his only consolation in life and death.

* Kuyper, ii. 591.

† Sleidan, p. 436.

Hermann and his friends were wanting in that power of faith which, as Varrentrapp aptly points out, "gives the courage not only to suffer, but also to act and to venture; they did not know how to combine the glance of the man of the world with the earnestness of the enthusiast."* *A Lasco* was not ignorant of this art; but he was brought too late into contact with the Elector, and would not perhaps have been in a position, with his measure of knowledge, to have made up the lack of the others.

We should have further to speak in strict chronological order of two other journeys that fall within the Emden period—to England and to Prussia; we shall transfer the description to its more appropriate connection. Before closing this section, however, we may yet be permitted to mention a little work which, it is true, first appeared from the press in 1551, but the composition of which and its circulation in a MS. form within the circle of the East Frisian clergy falls five years earlier than that date.

When *A Lasco* had returned to Emden after his run through to the court of *Hermann von Wied*, and in the time intervening before his departure for Worms, in April, 1545, he felt the urgent necessity for stating his view of the Lord's Supper in clear and candid language. We recall to mind that the Sacramental controversy had broken out anew; just when he was in Bonn at the court of the Archbishop, whose *Consultation* had afforded the first occasion for conflict, he had the leisure and the call for testing and justifying his own view upon the

* Varrentrapp, p. 279.

burning question of the day, at first perhaps only for his own satisfaction. The controversy, however, spread so widely on every side, called for such definite decision in all circles, that the *Coetus* in Emden was obliged to take up its position in relation thereto. We have seen that there were likewise elements in the land which were decidedly ranged as regards this question on the side of *Luther*, and, ever since the master had broken out with such inexorable wrath against the Swiss, these had plucked up courage here also to use decided language. *A Lasco* judged that he ought not to keep silence; but yet he had no wish to publish his view as a confessional writing, and thereby in his influential position to exercise a certain pressure; he chose therefore the more inoffensive form of expounding his conviction in a letter to a friend, which he placed in the hands of the Churches under his oversight.* Five years afterwards the time appeared to him to be come for making public the contents of this epistle. To the last *A Lasco* held to the view here set forth. In 1555 he testifies to King *Sigismund* of Poland, that he occupies to-day the same position with regard to this doctrine as he had confessed for ten years in East Friesland.†

Laski lays down in general concerning the Sacraments the proposition that they are institutions of Christ, committed to His Church to this end in particular, that by their rightful use the whole Church may be sealed (*obsignetur*) in the salutary communion with the Lord Christ, by which alone, when in faith we apprehend it, we are justified, but then also

* Kuyper, i. lxxi. *seq.*, where the proofs are given.

† *Ibid.*, ii. 22

that it be reminded of its duty to express an image of the communion with Christ, through faith in whom it receives the seal. Applied now to the Lord's Supper, the partaking thereof seals to us our communion with Christ in His body and blood, and with this also, agreeably to its appointment, our righteousness, which is apprehended in faith. "We willingly concede also the presence of our Lord Christ in His Supper, effectual for salvation to all who, by the observance of the Supper in His Church, testify their communion with Him, and His with us. Regarding the mode of His presence, we do not cause ourselves any inquietude; we must only, however, so long as the opinions of learned men differ with regard thereto, refrain from all curious research before the people, because it suffices us to have Christ." In connection with this view only the three opinions are to be decidedly rejected: the papistical doctrine of transubstantiation, the local and physical enclosing of the body and blood of Christ, and, finally, the other doctrine that the Sacraments are bare signs.

The standpoint of *A Lasco* is clear. He has most in common with the *Calvin-Melanchthon* conception, as this found its authentic expression in the altered *Augsburg Confession* of 1540, an alteration which was, to be sure, at least tacitly, admitted by *Luther*.

But the more calm and peaceful period in the life of our friend was hastening to its close. Only for three years was he permitted to enjoy his country seat undisturbed; then the trying times passed over this little country too, far as it was removed from the centre. The personality of *Laski* there by the sea towers too high, like a mighty German oak,

for him to escape the violent tempest that rages through the land, or not to be struck in the front rank by the lightning. That he would yield to the Emperor's threats, in opposition to his conscience, even the opponents did not look for from this man, so strong in faith. Thus he was compelled once more to set out upon his wanderings, to go forth into an unknown land abroad, with good courage this time also, for his eye was fixed upon the ways which God showed to him.

5. THE INTERIM IN ITS INFLUENCE ON LASKI'S FATE.

That which had contributed so essentially to the failure of the Cologne attempt at reformation—the incapacity “for combining the glance of the man of the world with the earnestness of the enthusiast”—now also asserted itself in a terribly fatal manner in the progress of the evangelical movement, as though this inaptitude were an ineradicable defect in the German character. And Germany's most valiant forces stood at that time already in the camp of the Protestants. Even the unpractised eye was compelled to recognise that the destinies were inevitably closing in in such wise as to admit of no arbitrament save that of the sword. How easy would it have been for the Smalcald League, even in the summer of 1546, to have thwarted the crafty policy of the Spaniard; turning as he did, with the most refined calculation, everything to account for the one end; how easy, with only a little diplomatic skill, to have availed themselves of the tension between kaiser and pope to their own

advantage. But all unsuspecting, almost without an inkling of the real state of the case and of the way to turn it to account, the Protestant princes drifted upon their fate. Even after the Smalcald war had already broken out, the decision was still in their hands. In the Thuringian forest they had about twenty thousand men ready equipped ; in the Wurtemberg country there lay encamped twelve thousand men ; and the Kaiser had still with toil to collect his widely scattered legions. To the gallant *Schärtlin** it would not have been a difficult thing in those days to cut off the approach of imperial troops from the south ; but the Protestant council of war was smitten as with blindness in presence of mere party considerations. Then came the occupation of Electoral Saxony by Duke *Maurice*, which proved by its result to be a deed of infamy against the Evangelical Church. Thus also in the political domain the raising of the particular interests above the common weal, the division in the League, as well as the ecclesiastical disunion already so soon manifesting itself, redounded only to the advantage of the enemy. On the Lochau heath, near Muhlberg, the decisive blow was delivered in the spring of 1547. The battle was not so terribly bloody ; but yet in it was cast the die of world-historic import, and this fell in favour of the Kaiser : he had dealt the Protestant powers an almost fatal blow. The Elector of Saxony was taken prisoner, Duke *Maurice* received his electorate, and an imperial garrison occupied the city of Luther ; as an after-consequence of this victory, the Landgrave of Hesse

* See Robertson, *Charles V.*, Book viii., edition of 1839, pp. 248—250.—Tr.

was compelled seven weeks later (19th June) to surrender at discretion.

The fate of the Evangelical Church was placed, humanly speaking, in the hands of the Emperor. Only in Lower Saxony were a few convulsive movements still to be observed, in the endeavour to rise against the power of the Spaniard. *Christopher of Oldenburg*, the valiant swordsman and warlike advocate of the Protestants—we have already often met with this friend of Laski—placed himself, with *Albert von Mansfeld*, at the head of a host of horsemen and landsquenets. In the neighbourhood of Dronkenborg they came upon the imperial troops under the command of Duke *Eric* of Brunswick. Here at least the Protestants were victorious ; joyfully was the Whitsun-festival kept in Bremen. But the little gain could not countervail the irreparable loss : the Emperor did not even feel called upon to notice the success of the Lower Saxons ; the trivial advantage of the Protestants would of necessity disappear if fortune still favoured him to pluck all the fruits of his victory at Muhlberg.

It was not a conflict exclusively between Rome and Wittenberg which, even in a political respect, had here been brought to a final issue. There was for the evangelical party a promising sign in the profound discord, the severe tension, which was now apparent between the Emperor and the Pope. *Paul III.* was more concerned to assert his secular dignity against the Emperor, than, in alliance with him, to do violence to the Evangelical Church at this favourable juncture ; and *Charles V.* was prepared rather to surrender the profit of the victory and to sacrifice the cause of the Romish Church, than to

suffer his imperial power to be in the least curtailed. The blasphemous words are said to have escaped the Pope at this time, in his rage, that "he would help himself as best he might, though he should summon Hell to his assistance."* A league between the Pope and the Sultan was judged not improbable; while the imperial ambassador in Rome thought of seizing the castle of St. Angelo in the name of the Emperor. This state of affairs wrought effectively, and, despite the injury which the Interim inflicted upon the Evangelical Church, we may even say, favourably, upon the treatment of the subjugated Protestants. For voices were raised within the surroundings of the Emperor which were desirous offhand of wiping out the last thirty years from the history ; and every one felt that Germany at this moment possessed once more a chieftain of commanding power. Who, however, will venture to deny that with such attempt the bowstring, too greatly strained, might have broken, and the little company there in Bremen have been swollen into an avalanche such as would have swept before it the whole empire ?

Under these circumstances the Diet assembled at Augsburg in the autumn of 1547. Only a quarter of a century separated it from the memorable Diet at Worms ; but what a history in this short space of time ! And this time the Protestants had no longer a *Luther* boldly to confront kaiser and empire in the power of God alone. *Charles V.* himself was

* "Que hara lo que pudiere y se ajutara con el diablo." Ranke (v. 10) takes the words from the important despatches of the imperial ambassador Diego de Mendoza, the most versatile statesman of the Spanish imperial policy.

present, ready, in the full sense of his power, to reap the fruits of his victorious policy. He looked upon the issue of a religious ordinance for Germany as his most pressing task. The division in the Church was to be settled, in the form, it is true, which should please the Catholic potentate. A Christian council was to bring about the agreement. The Council had indeed already begun ; in what sense it would execute this task could not be doubtful to the Protestants from the protocols already lying before them. It was still a fortunate circumstance that this very Tridentine-Bolognese council constituted the apple of discord between pope and kaiser, and was consequently incapable of exerting the looked-for influence. Until the Council should have pronounced a decision, certain terms of union were *in the meanwhile (interim)* to be recognised between the mother Church and the sects : on this side the concession granted of the marriage of the priests, the cup to the laity, the less rigid enforcement of fasting ; on that side the concession demanded of the primacy of the Pope, the seven Sacraments and transubstantiation, the intercession of the saints, the processions, and other ceremonies.*

* Behind the redoubtable Emperor stood his confessor, Peter de Soto, a Dominican friar. Respecting this man, Hooper writes from Antwerp in April, 1549, "I am informed by our ambassador that if the Emperor's confessor were but moderately religious, there would be the greatest hope of shortly bringing him [Charles] into the knowledge of Christ. . . . When the Emperor was in Upper Germany seven months since, he was deserted by his confessor because he would not act with severity against some godly persons, and restore popery altogether." And Jewell writes in May, 1559, "Our universities are so depressed and ruined, that at Oxford there are hardly two individuals who think with us, and even they are so dejected and broken in spirit, that they can do nothing."

It is a painful course to follow the introduction of this *Interim* into the different Protestant lands of Germany. With only very rare exceptions, the princes yielded, however reluctantly; seriously threatened with the imperial displeasure, the magistracy of the cities likewise submitted, often after an affecting resistance. Unhappily even *Melanchthon* was pliable enough to take a part in framing the so-called Leipsic *Interim*, which would tolerate as indifferent that which seemed to thousands a grievous outrage on their evangelic faith. Yet many pastors were found willing to surrender office and livelihood rather than the Gospel freedom of a Christian man. Driven from house and home, they went forth to endure extreme penury; this bitter step appeared to them, after all, preferable to remaining in a comfortable office under dire distress of conscience.

Even into our little, half-forgotten country, by the low-lying strand of the sea, so remote from the world's intercourse, the effect of this *Interim* soon penetrated, and that in a way fraught with momentous consequences for our friend. The residence in Bonn, and afterwards in Worms, had brought him near to the centre of this movement; then had come the dark days of the war and its lamentable issue. When his supporter, Duke *Christopher* of Oldenburg, entered as victor into Bremen, and there held the Whitsun-festival, friend *Harden-*

That despicable friar Soto and another Spanish monk [John de Villa Garsya] have so torn up by the roots all that Peter Martyr had so prosperously planted, that they have reduced the vineyard of the Lord into a wilderness." Soto was afterwards accused to the Inquisition of heretical opinions, but died at Trent in 1563 during the preliminary proceedings (*Original Letters*, p. 59).—TR.

berg had already become pastor at the cathedral in Bremen, after resigning his office under the Elector. The course of events, too, our friend could follow as though present. *Stanislas Laski* attended the Diet of Augsburg as ambassador of Poland.* Furnished with information by his brother, our *Laski* possessed an acquaintance with the progress of affairs such as no one, not even the Countess, could acquire so reliably and so quickly. He had soon learnt that the Cardinal of Trent, sent by the Emperor to the Pope—it was *Madrucci*—had been able to accomplish nothing with *Paul III.*, and thus the alienation of the two powers had grown into open hostility ; he knew as early as February that the Pope was besieging Piacenza, which (after the murder of *Pier Luigi Farnese*, a son of the Pope) had been seized by the imperial commander *Ferrante Gonzaga*.† These accounts, nevertheless, did not inspire our *Laski* with much hope, since he had a keen eye for the understanding of worldly affairs, and, what is of greater importance, at the same time knew how to measure the limits of their influence upon things spiritual. Just in those days he wrote the prophetic words, true for all time, “As always, so do I still in the present day think of the diets in regard to religious affairs. If we undertake to guide and advance matters of religion by human foresight and prudence, it is a downhill course with them, from the moment when we think we can strengthen them with human safeguards.”

A Lasco had not been deceived as to the final issue of the ecclesiastical business at the Diet. “ May

* Eichhorn, *Stanislaus Hosius* (Mayence, 1854), i. 94.

† Kuyper, ii. 615.

the Lord have His Church in His keeping!" he exclaims with sadness after the proclamation of the *Interim*. The Leipsic Interim, "upon which are impressed the features of Philip," occasions him deep grief. He refrains indeed, out of esteem for *Melanchthon*, from expressing, even in a confidential letter to a friend, the feelings which the book has awakened in him; only the one ejaculation escapes his weary soul, "But if all that which, as a matter of indifference [adiaphoron], is not censured in Scripture is of such kind that we may receive it again, what shall be said of those who have taught that one must, even at the sacrifice of life, combat that which *they* now do not combat? and for how many was this the occasion of their being in reality martyred. Oh, come, Lord Jesus!?"*

The imperial messenger came to Emden also, where he alighted at the end of August, 1548, to make a peremptory demand of submission to the *Interim*. The Countess was abroad at the moment of the arrival of the messenger, on a visit to the Count Palatine *Otho Henry* at Heidelberg, to consult with him on Church concerns; *A Lasco* was on the point of complying with an urgent invitation to England, to co-operate in the ordering of the ecclesiastical affairs of that land. The Countess had already granted him the necessary leave of absence, with a promise that he should return to the service of the East Frisian Church. *Laski* deemed it the most advisable course, though deciding with sorrowful heart, not even now to recall his promise of a speedy departure; he might at least

* Kuyper, ii. 617.

hope by his own absence and that of the Countess to delay the decision ; and that in those troublous days seemed in itself a gain. What a time of trial it was for all, what perils threatened the heads of the Evangelical Church, may be inferred from the fact that our friend could only venture to make the journey in disguise and under an assumed name. Even while *en route* *A Lasco* addressed consolatory letters from Antwerp, and then repeatedly afterwards from England, to his Church under the cross. Unhappily these letters have not hitherto been recovered. Emmius seems to have had them before him when he excerpts from them the exhortation to the preachers only to be steadfast and of good courage. If they are driven from house and home, their faithful superintendent has prepared for them a place of refuge in England ; there they can live undisturbed and welcomed, with many others who are fugitives for their faith's sake. Only let them faithfully endure. It is the lot of true believers in this age to endure persecution. The last times have appeared. Satan rages in order to destroy the kingdom of Christ ; but Christ will be victorious and deliver His people, since He is indeed the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Great and powerful, it is true, is the Emperor, who commands ; but greater and more powerful is God, who forbids. To the Emperor we must yield obedience, but only unto the threshold of the altar.*

The Countess had meanwhile returned, dejected and perplexed ; for in Heidelberg too they were unresolved what to do, and with leaden weight

* Emmius, *Rerum Frisicarum Historia*, p. 936.

grief pressed upon all. It was a perilous venture for land and people to call down upon them the wrath of the Emperor by refusal. And the Emperor was in dangerous proximity. From Augsburg he had repaired to Brussels, to confer the government of the Netherlands upon his son *Philip*, whom he had sent for from Spain. The latter, at the wish of his father, had just made, one might almost say, his bridal tour through Germany, to win beforehand the affection of this land in view of the coming election to the empire.* At first the Countess sought by entreaties and supplications to be spared subjection to the Interim. If the Emperor would but have patience and consideration for a helpless widow, and suffer ecclesiastical affairs in her poor little land to remain as they were until the decision of a council! The Emperor, however, would not spare the woman on this point either; and demanded unconditional submission. Yet a further attempt from Emden in February, 1549. So long, at least, they had been successful in delaying the execution of the Interim. The statesman *Friedrich ter Westen* was sent to Brussels to the imperial court and entrusted with the conducting of the difficult business. He was not the man for executing it in the spirit of *Laski*. In the report sent in by him we recognise the words of a statesman who has suffered himself to be intimidated by the Emperor, and thinks nothing can be more painful than that he and his land should be exposed to persecution for the sake of matters of faith. Yes, he is, after all, the Sadducee which the historian of East Fries-

* Maurenbrecher, *Karl V. und die Deutschen Protestanten* (Dusseldorf, 1865), p. 241.

land describes him as being.* He knows how, with adept art, to augment the alarm of the Countess, to attenuate the strain upon the conscience exerted by the Interim, falsely representing to her that all the Protestant States, with only ever fewer exceptions, had submitted, and that it must surely appear strange that she, as a woman, should scruple to do that for her little land which had been already done by the mightiest Protestant rulers.

While the Countess, terrified by the skilfully composed accounts of her ambassador at the court of Brussels, began to waver in regard to her bearing towards the Interim, *A Lasco* arrived once more in East Friesland. At Emden he remains only a few days, on account of his travelling companion from England (Count *Mansfeld*), then hastens over to Aurich (20th March, 1549), where the Countess is anxiously awaiting him. He found her under the spell of the courtier and worldly counsellor, who urged submission to the inflexible will of the Emperor. *A Lasco* had quickly divined the state of affairs, and was prepared for the worst. "We are here expecting," he writes to a friend in England (9th of April), "with the greatest certainty cross and persecution, and encourage each other to the enduring of the same in the Lord, by calling upon His holy name, that by patience and faithfulness in bearing we may be conquerors in all that which the Lord may determine to permit against us, to the glory of His name and to our improvement. Assuredly the Lord cares for us, and is so mighty that He is able to cast to the ground by a single

* *Emmius*, p. 937.

word of His mouth all our enemies, however numerous they may be ; the Lord, however, is also so good, that not a single hair can fall from our heads without His will, even though the whole world should seek to assail us. God is just as little capable of ever wishing us ill, as a mother to her child, or the eyelid to the eye, yea as little as He is ever capable of ceasing to be God. He is to be praised in all things which He permits against us, because He never permits anything against us but that which ministers to our salvation. To Him we have one and all committed our cause ; with all patience we await that which He is minded to permit against us."*

One feels from these beautiful words of heroic confidence in God that our friend had quickly succeeded in inspiring with fresh power the sunken courage of his ministers. Not upon an unfruitful soil had the rousing language of the leader fallen, as we shall soon perceive. Alert and active on every side, he looked forth to see how he could meet the pernicious Interim, how he could protect the Evangelical Church against the oppression of the Emperor. Though at first only in the blue haze of the distance, in dim outline, there seemed to present itself a means of deliverance from the almost overwhelming power of the imperial adversary of the Reformation, *A Lasco* eagerly turned his glance thither, ready to co-operate should there be need for his co-operation. In this readiness, he resolved once more to quit East Friesland, in the hope of being able to render greater service

* Kuyper, ii. 621.—The letter is to Cecil, and is given also in Strype's *Cranmer*, Appendix.—TR.

by the possible issue of the journey, than by passively witnessing the slow course of events in Emden.

Like an oppressive shroud of iron lay the power of the Emperor and his Interim upon Protestant Germany; but beneath it the evangelical sentiment of the people surged and heaved uninterruptedly, and in fierce insurrection against the unbounded power of the Spaniard and Catholic. They could not brook the contemptuous scorn with which the Emperor had treated the two captured German princes, the less so since they recognised in this treatment a threat of that which they had to expect in regard to their dearest interests at the hand of this potentate. There was an upheaval in the depths. "Rather axe than pen; rather blood than ink," these decisive words of the Margrave *John of Brandenburg*, with which he refused to subscribe to the Interim, found an echo in many a prince's heart. And he stood by his word. The noble Duke *Otho of Brunswick* made, as early as the beginning of the year 1548, the first attempt at concluding a league of princes (the Germanic Confederation) against the tyranny of the Emperor.* It was deemed of great importance for the after-progress to gain over specially the Duke *Albert of Prussia* to the League, then further England, Poland, the old hereditary enemy of *Charles V.*, and other powers. In Poland *Sigismund Augustus* had lately ascended the throne of his fathers. The Protestants

* Raumer, *Historisches Taschenbuch* (Leipsic, 1857), p. 19.—Bucer was in the neighbourhood of Augsburg about the end of January of the year 1548, waiting till Joachim, Elector of Brandenburg, should send for him, to aid in promoting the Reformation there (*Original Letters*, p. 640)

placed great hope in the King, who appeared to be attached to the Gospel. *Laski*, too, shared this hope. Hardly had he heard that the evangelically minded preacher of the King, *Lawrence Prasnickius*, entertained the thought of laying down his office, before he most earnestly besought him in a letter to desist from this intention.* In Riesenburg Duke *Albert* of Prussia held an interview with the Vayvode of Marienburg, *Achatius of Zemen*, for the purpose of consultation. The zealous Count *Volrad von Mansfeld* had gone to England, to gain the adhesion of the Lord Protector. *Laski* had made the return journey thence in the same vessel with him; he was fully initiated into the plans of the Count, whether by *Volrad* himself or by the Duke *Christopher* of Oldenburg. Immediately after his return to Emden he is in a position to transmit to the Archbishop of Canterbury a detailed account of the state of affairs, for communication to the Duke of *Somerset*.

It was now as though the renowned diplomatic vein in the *Laski* family began to display itself in our *Johannes* too. For the first time was this the case, and then only as occasioned by the prospect of being able in this way to put a stop to the oppression of the Evangelical Church. The journey was made in secret. *A Lasco* had gone to Bremen, a few days after on to Hamburg, whence he soon found an opportunity of taking ship for Dantsic. It is unfortunately unexplained what he did during the following eight weeks here in the renowned seaport town of his native land. It seems to have

* Kuyper, ii. 623.

been mainly a time of waiting. *Laski* regarded himself always as a Pole, subject to the will of his king. He had come to Dantsic to obtain the royal permission to comply with a call of *Edward VI.*, if perchance his fatherland itself did not claim his co-operation in the guidance of a hoped-for reformation.* The King of England had himself therefore written to *Sigismund Augustus* assuming that, with the new ruler, the Gospel would now find its way into Poland, and concluding with the wish that so important a power as *Laski* might not be lost to his fatherland. *Laski* too had written to the King and placed himself at his disposal, if he would make use of him in an ecclesiastical ministry in accordance with the doctrine of Christ.† In the middle of July we meet with *Laski* at Konigsberg, where he remained for a few weeks.‡

The name *A Lasco* was no strange one to the Duke *Albert* of Prussia. In all the bloody conflicts and encounters which the stout Hohenzoller, as Grand Master of the German Order of Knights, had maintained with Poland since 1512, because he

* Kuyper, ii. 31.

† *Ibid.*, p. 624.

‡ During the interval *Laski* would appear to have realised his previous intention of visiting Strassburg (see above, p. 318). Uttenhove says in a letter to Bullinger from Strassburg, 7th July, 1549, "Immediately after my return to Strassburg with John a Lasco, I observed a letter," etc. (*Original Letters*, p. 583; cf. p. 654; compare Pijper, *Jan Uttenhove, Zijn Leven en Zyne Werken* (Leyden, 1883), pp. 44—49, to whom the credit of this discovery is due). After spending some fourteen days with Bullinger in Zurich, Uttenhove passed a short time at Geneva. His return route would lie through Basle, where it is likely he was joined by *A Lasco* about the beginning of July. There is ground for believing that *A Lasco* during his brief stay in Strassburg was the guest of John Burcher, who had purchased a house there in 1548.—TR.

refused to render the oath of feudal allegiance to his uncle, the powerful King of Poland, it almost always happened that, when it came to negotiations for peace or for the conclusion of an armistice, there stood in the forefront of those conducting the negotiations on the side of Poland the illustrious Archbishop of Gnesen. When in 1525—it was Palm Sunday—Duke *Albert* concluded peace in Cracow, he received the land as an hereditary fief at the hands of the King of Poland, upon the surrender of the office of Grand Master and the renunciation of all participation in the Order on the part of the land of Prussia; he deposed the oath of fealty upon the book of the Gospels, which the Archbishop of Gnesen had placed in the King's lap.* Another *Laski*, during this brilliant and world-famed solemnity, held in his arms the royal prince and heir to the throne, *Sigismund Augustus*, then four years old. More than once at that time was *Jerome a Lasco* found present as ambassador in Konigsberg. The earnest, devout Duke, trained in his youth by the Archbishop *Hermann* of Cologne, and won to the Gospel by the sermons of *Osiander* at Nuremberg, had, supported by the counsels of Luther, opened a free course to the Reformation in his land. In Konigsberg *Paul Speratus*, here in the country the bishops *George von Polentz* and, somewhat later, *Erhard von Queis*, boldly went over to the cause of the Reformation. The vigorous Duke bestowed great pains upon the matter of the schools. The establishing of a gymnasium (called *Particularium*) was soon followed by the formation of the University,

* Hase, *Herzog Albrecht von Preussen und sein Hofprediger* (Leipsic, 1879), p. 33.

inaugurated on the 17th of August, 1544. *William Gnapheus*, a friend of Laski, was rector of the *Particularium*, as likewise professor at the University, a man who for the Gospel's sake had become a fugitive from his Dutch home, and had betaken himself, with many others of his countrymen, to the asylum which had been at once opened to the persecuted for their faith's sake in the newly founded duchy of Prussia. With *Entfelder*, Professor of Theology, likewise hailing from the Netherlands, *Laski* had for years past maintained an epistolary correspondence.* It had been from the first the secret wish of our friend to find a suitable field of labour in Prussia. It would have afforded a sweet solace to one of such ardent love for his country to live at least at the gates of Poland, and from a point close at hand to keep the eye of his mind fixed upon the progress of the Gospel in his native land. Duke *Albert*, too, desired to win this important man for his country. He esteemed him highly on account of his pre-eminent intellectual gifts, and equally so on account of his heroic spirit and virtuous life. He once observed that he could not but wonder exceedingly that of the same parents should have been born natural brothers—he meant Stanislas and Johannes—of such opposite bent of mind, the one praiseworthy in the works of peace and piety, and of such eminent import in the service of the Church; the other, on the contrary, a true-warrior, unresting, among the bravest of the brave in contempt of danger.†

* So far as I know, only one of these letters is preserved to us, but that a very interesting one (Gabbema, p. 49).

† Gabbema, p. 51.

Advances were very early made to the East Frisian superintendent.* They are to be assigned to the period when he was living in retirement as a private citizen in Emden, and, suffering greatly from the rigour of the ungenial climate, was directing his glance to the discovery of another asylum. Often already had Duke *Albert* applied to him by letter ; the negotiations, however, had come to nothing, probably on account of suspicions raised with regard to his theological standpoint, which was not in harmony with the tendency then prevailing in Prussia. The Netherlanders who had escaped from the persecutions of *Charles V.*, and settled down peacefully in Prussian Holland, under the protection accorded to them by the Duke, had been fiercely assailed by *Speratus* in his little book *Ad Batavos vagantes* (1536); a like fate was encountered by our Laski also at the hands of the Konigsberg court theologians. Several years before this *A Lasco* had entrusted a manuscript copy of his Epitome of the Doctrine of the East Frisian Church to Professor *Entfelder*, of Konigsberg, and *Melanchthon* had warned the Duke against this work.† Yet the wish that he should take up his abode in Prussia arose on both sides more than once after this, in a more palpable form now in particular, when communications were passing with Poland, and a lively hope was awakened of seeing his native land, not only ranged on the side of those who were endeavouring to form a league against the Emperor, but also of like sentiment in an ecclesiastical respect with these opponents of *Charles V.*

* Kuyper, ii. 575.

† Compare p. 285, note.

They were exceedingly stirring days for the Church life, those few weeks which *A Lasco* spent at Konigsberg. Only a half-year before (27th January, 1549) *Osiander*, expelled from Nuremberg by reason of the Interim, had reached the Duke's capital, and been installed as minister of the Church in the old town, in place of Magister *Funck*, whom the Duke had made his court-preacher. As early as the month of April, controversies had broken out. *Osiander*, in the theses with which he inaugurated his entrance upon the office of professor at the University, had brought out into bold relief his opposition to the mode of teaching concerning justification introduced by *Luther*, as a purely judicial act of God towards the believer. "To justify may mean"—such is the declaration in these theses—"to pronounce righteous; according to the Gospel, it is to be understood as to make righteous. When justification is said to take place through faith, the expression is an abbreviated one; for it is not faith, as something formal, but Christ, in whom we believe as the subject-matter of faith, who makes righteous. No one is justified without at the same time being also made alive."* The disputatious Professor *Lauterwald* passionately assailed him, and now the tide of battle swayed to the one side, and now to the other, and drew all the world into sympathy, while the plague was raging fearfully in the stricken town. *A Lasco* dwelt at the house of *Lauterwald* during his stay at Konigsberg; † in the controversy he took no part. He did not share the doctrine of

* Hase, p. 133.

† So, at least, it is conjectured by Kayper (ii. 627).

*Osiander.** Still more painfully was he affected by the little book issued by *Osiander* two years afterwards against the Wittenbergers, and especially against *Melanchthon*. "It has now become a fashion to sow new doctrinal differences and to assail the Wittenberg school, by which, nevertheless, the whole earth was advanced in the knowledge of the Gospel, yea, to which *Osiander* also, if he would only admit it, as is reasonable, is under very great obligation. But, alas! such are now the fortunes of our days," sighs the noble man, with the clear deep glance into the smarting wounds which the Evangelical Church had inflicted upon itself in these passionate feuds. † During these theological controversies *A Lasco* converses with the Duke on very serious matters of faith. "I cannot express the joy which the letters of your Highness afforded me, from which it is easy to perceive how near religion lies to your heart, and how careful you are to preserve the purity of the Christian doctrine. Would that such a zeal were met with, not only in other princes, but even in the bulk of theologians (who yet wish to be taken for pillars of the Church), and that at the same time in fair alliance with that modesty which, in friendly spirit, seeks out the foundation of every doctrine, and first listens in Christian love before it pronounces its judgment, not to say its prejudice. Because your Highness acts thus in great kindness and benevolence, all truly pious persons must love such modesty and philanthropy." ‡ By what mis-

* Kuyper, ii. 663: "Osiandri neque doctrinam neque institutum probo, quod quidem ad causam justificationis attinet."

† *Ibid.*, ii. 663; and yet more at large, in fine outspokenness, in the letter to the Duke, ii. 666.

‡ *Ibid.*, ii. 624.

fortune could not a post be found for *A Lasco* in the vicinity of the Duke? It is a painful providence. For the two heartily devout men have so many endearing points of contact; and an ecclesiastical figure like *A Lasco* would really have redounded to a higher blessing for the land, than the *Funcks*, and *Staphylus*, and *Mörlins*, and the rest. The whole mental bent and mode of thought in our friend seemed, as it were, made for a court-preacher of the Hohenzollers.

While *A Lasco* in Konigsberg was waiting, as it would seem in vain, for a letter from his king, and was being initiated by the Duke into the secret course of the policy of the Germanic Confederation,* letters reached him from Emden which called for his instant return. On the 1st of August he was in Dantsic, and, after a voyage of thirteen days from that port, again at home. The Duke was deeply concerned about the progress of affairs in East Friesland; a lengthy epistle of *A Lasco* introduces the distant noble friend, as likewise, by a piece of good fortune, us children of a later age, into the ever-shifting course of events.† Immediately after the departure of *Laski* peremptory orders for the introduction of the Interim without a moment's delay had reached Emden. The Countess saw no way of escape. Some courtiers drew up a new formulary; one is tempted to call it the Emden Interim. It is a gathering from various sources:

* Kuyper, ii. 628. In this letter he has recourse to cipher, of which the art of Kuyper has not been able entirely to make out the meaning. By the *chameleon* I should conjecture Ter Westen to be meant.

† *Ibid.*, p. 628.

the Augsburg Interim, intermingled with snatches from the long-obsolete Luneburg Church Order of the days of Enno.* The Emden ministers refused their assent to this formulary, framed behind their backs, as also to another which was to be drawn up in concert with them ; the citizens espoused the side of the ministers. The church doors were closed against the refractory. "That is indeed in the power of the Countess," exclaimed the faithful confessors, "to open or close the church doors, but, for their vocation's sake, they could not keep silence at the command of the Regent." The worship was held in the churchyard, and thronged by yet greater crowds than before in the church. Here, too, amidst the graves of the departed, the children were baptised, the affianced couples united in wedlock. Only in Norden had *Lemsius* and the other pastors of the Lutheran school submitted to the Interim.

Such was the position of affairs at the time of *Laski's* return. It was a joy to his heart to behold the devoted courage of faith in his loyal pastors, the firm and lively zeal of the citizens. Very earnestly did he appeal to the conscience of the Countess, on account of her submissiveness to the imperial injunction. On this point the severe Christian knew no reserve ; he spoke without fear of man, as the advocate and servant of the Lord.

Thus *A Lasco* still for a while held the wonted services in the churchyard, and weekly also did the *Coetus* meet, when the superintendent would vigor-

* Meiners (i. 308) gives the date of this formulary as 16th July, 1549. A comparison with the Luneburg ordinance (likewise in Meiners, i. 143) shows that the new formulary was indeed, as Meiners says, "very greatly pervaded with the papal leaven."

ously strengthen his fellow-soldiers, who, though deprived of their incomes, still held out faithfully in the work of the ministry. But at the court of the Kaiser there was no inclination any longer to tolerate the presence of the dreaded man in East Friesland. Two grave matters of accusation were brought against him : that by private letters he was diffusing his false doctrine even in the parent-land of the Emperor, and that the journey to England and Poland had no other object than the execution of certain plots against his imperial majesty. Of what avail was his defence, that his doctrine was no false doctrine, and that from all existing letters it was clearly manifest that his journey had respect to entirely different objects ? The suspicion was awakened at the imperial court, and the present state of affairs was favourable to the removal of the towering form in the neighbouring land. From Brussels stress was laid again and again upon the last charge in particular ; and the Countess, who felt herself too weak to protect the mighty preacher of repentance, implored him, for the welfare of the land, to quit her domains. *A Lasco* at length yielded to entreaty. In the middle of October, 1549, he bade farewell to the scene of his prolonged labours, extending over nearly ten years, and to the land which had become to him a second home. It was no dismissal, as we shall afterwards see, no actual laying down of office—only a withdrawing from the land until better times should have dawned.

The honourable leave-taking accorded to *A Lasco*, on the part of the whole community, bore brilliant testimony to the high esteem in which the devout

and fearless man was held. A hundred godly men and an equal number of women were deputed to prepare a banquet on the 24th of September in honour of the departing superintendent and of those ministers who had not submitted to the Interim, who, moreover, were now suffered further to continue their services in the churchyard without interruption. A parting testimonial, the gift of the whole Church, was declined by the unselfish man, though at the time in circumstances far from affluent. After the meal was ended, and the tables removed, the remainder of the day was spent in earnest exhortations to perseverance in the confession of the faith and in prayer. Then, amidst many tears, they accompanied the superintendent to his home, and took leave of him with the kiss of peace. Nor did the Countess forsake the man who had with such terrible and almost relentless candour shown to her her sins. In a document still extant she bears witness to *A Lasco* that for a period of more than seven years, during which he had held the oversight of the East Frisian Church, he had proved blameless, alike in the advancing of the pure doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as in the conduct of his public life ; so that, on account of his faith, his piety, learning, integrity, and unwearied diligence, to which testimony all her subjects, so far as they have the Christian religion and piety truly at heart, would give their assent, she would fain have retained him during all the time of her rule. But the Emperor would no longer tolerate his presence in the land ; and, since his farther stay would prove perilous to himself, his family, and the whole land, she had prevailed on him to go elsewhere,

to which he had consented on condition that the Church should grant him leave so to do. With a heavy heart, the Church had resolved to do so in consideration of the threatening danger,* yet with the entreaty, at the same time, that he would return if God should again vouchsafe to His Church to enjoy calmer times.†

Thus our friend was obliged to take up again the wanderer's staff, and a second time go forth into exile for his Lord Christ's sake. The step may well have cost him a struggle, as when ten years before he took leave of his beloved Poland. But no sound of complaint escapes this spirit, so heroic in its resignation. He goes forth, looking up to his Lord, to learn what land He will now show him. In the first place, he directs his steps to Bremen, to repose for a while in the hospitable parsonage of his old friend, and to abide in the vicinity of that land which during a decennium he has regarded with so great affection. He looked upon himself still as the spiritual adviser of the bereaved Church, and felt himself bound to assist it with his counsel in this time of severe trial. A charming letter of consolation to his ministerial brethren at Emden has come down to us.‡ He cannot and will not relax in his care and sympathy for them and the whole East Frisian Church so long as he lives. He beseeches them to continue faithful, to keep the Church united, to exhort the members to persever-

* Emmius relates (p. 939) that the Church unanimously refused the dismissal, and only conceded to him the liberty of departing for a time in order to escape the rage of Antiochus, until at a fitting period they should recall him.

† Kuyper, ii. 635.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 637.

ance in their confession, as also to endurance in the spirit of gentleness and thanksgiving. The letter concludes with the words, "Let us entreat of the Lord to have mercy upon His Church, so greatly distracted, and by His Holy Spirit so to lead and guide us in His service, that one day, raised up with our congregation, we may be able to hear those longed-for words, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father.' " To others also, private persons in Emden, letters of earnest exhortation were addressed, a very memorable one, for instance, to his friend *Lenthius*, secretary to the Countess. "I pray thee, my Lenthius, continue in thy post; but withal ever be mindful of that 'unto the threshold of the altar.' It is a grave thing to incur guilt in regard to the body and blood of Christ. From the guilt of this transgression no one will one day be able to release himself who stands in such association with any counsels against the Church of Christ and His office, as not according to the measure of his vocation to testify his disapproval thereof, not to say if he wittingly and willingly affords aid therein."*

He had left his family at his country-house; he wished to spare them the vicissitudes of a homeless wandering in the midst of the winter. They remained at Abbingwehr, commended to the faithful charge of his congregation.†

A man had actually presented himself who, despite all the warnings of *Laski* that his removal was only a temporary one, despite all the deprecatory letters from the most diverse quarters, could set himself to obtain the office of a superintendent in

* Kuyper, ii. 640.

† *Ibid.*, p. 638.

Emden, and thereby to represent *Laski* as permanently relieved of his post, to the joy of the imperial party,—*Nicolai Buscoducensis* (*Van den Bossche*) to wit,* whose brother, court-preacher in Denmark, we shall unhappily very soon have occasion for becoming acquainted with. *Laski* cannot bring himself to believe such procedure possible on the part of an evangelical preacher. “If, however, he should venture on it, God will punish him, that others may take warning.”

With regard to the stay of *Laski* in Bremen but little is known to us. It is characteristic of the man that during his sojourn in that town he received the Holy Supper at the hand of the strict Lutheran *Timann*. Such an incident at that time created no disagreement, although the Bremen clergy were accurately informed as to the views of *Laski*. For he had at the same time explained his view at large in a letter to the Bremen clergy, now unhappily lost, probably having reference to a conference.† But then in 1550 people did not cherish the same rigid and harsh notions about admission to the Table of the Lord, as was the case a few years afterwards.‡

In the first days of April, 1550, *A Lasco* repaired to Hamburg. He had come to the resolution in the course of the winter of accepting a call to London, seeing that a favourable turn to affairs in East Friesland was not to be looked for very soon. He hoped more easily to find an opportunity for embarking on the Elbe than on the Weser. Here he had to

* On this man compare also Wolters, *Reformationsgesch. der Stadt Wesel* (Bonn, 1868), p. 97, etc.

† Kuyper, i. liii.

‡ Compare Spiegel, p. 140.

wait about a month, during which time he was much in converse with *Aepinus*, the chief pastor of the town. That which *A Lasco* had endured on account of the Interim led the strictly Lutheran pastor to overlook the doctrinal differences which separated them. In these days the exile held friendly converse with *Westphal* too.* A decennium later *A Lasco* reminded this his passionate opponent of those Hamburg days. In many a familiar conversation he had, as he tells him, unfolded before him the doctrine which he had constantly proclaimed in East Friesland; but at that time it had not appeared blasphemous to *Westphal*; nor had he on account of it made any break in his intercourse with *A Lasco*.†

Here in Hamburg important and long-looked-for letters reached our friend. From the King of Poland he received the desired written testimony exonerating him from the charge of ever having entered into any plot with him against *Charles V.*, unhappily *only* this testimony; that other hope, namely, of being recalled to his native land in order to preach the Gospel there, is passed over without reference in the royal autograph. "He desires me still to wait. Therefore I too will not yet give up hope."† When indeed did a Pole, in his touching love of country, ever yet abandon such hope of return? The letters from England contained important political news, which he hastened to communicate to Duke *Albert*.

* We look upon this man as the one, of all the representatives of the Lutheran orthodoxy, who has exerted the most fatal influence upon the progress of the Evangelical Church. To our regret, we shall have so often to meet with him in the subsequent history.

† Kuyper, ii. 639.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

The senders are unknown to us ; but they must have filled high posts in the State, and it is a mark of the great confidence reposed by them in *A Lasco*, that they should make communications to him of such nature that he ventures to transmit part of them to the Duke only in cipher.

The letters were, however, at the same time, the messengers to announce to *A Lasco* how greatly his co-operation was counted on in London ; and so soon as the attack of ague had only abated—in the first days of May—he embarked for that land, which, no less than East Friesland, his Lord Christ had certainly assigned to him as the scene of his abundantly blessed labours.

IX.

IN ENGLAND.

HOW entirely different, after all, was the course of the Reformation at the outset in England from that which it was on the Continent.

It was a restless anxiety about his soul's salvation which led the Augustin monk into the depths of Holy Scripture; and, so soon as he had found the heart's core of Scripture, Jesus Christ as our only justification before God, it was the goad of God's truth which impelled him in heartfelt compassion to testify among his people of that which he had himself experienced to his spiritual life; it was this which urged him, in glad and fearless spirit, to stand up, in presence of kaiser and kingdom, in defence of his treasure before all the world. His word wrought like a work of redemption upon all the German people, who rose up for him and made his cause their own, unconcerned about any consequences, careless what gain or loss should arise from such action for the nation, contented with the peace which the Gospel afforded to the spirit. Over there in England it is a violent and disputatious king who at first couches the lance against *Luther*, and rejoices in having received from *Leo X.* the title of *Fidei Defensor* in reward for his literary passage

of arms. Rougher indeed, but quite as befitting, was the name with which the German Reformer dubbed the crowned head of England when, in petulant mood, he greeted him as "mad Harry." The King seemed bent on justifying the appellation. The passionate desire for ridding himself of *Catharine* of Arragon, to whom he had been married many long years, in order to be able to raise to the rank of queen and consort her maid-of-honour, *Anne Bolelyn*, gave the first impulse to his effort to free himself from the power of the Pope, who refused the needed consent to a divorce. Had this been the only cause, he would have been unequal to the task of successfully carrying into effect a change involving such far-reaching consequences. But even before the time of *Henry VIII.*, and in particular, with brilliant result, under the vigorous *Edward IV.*, the power of the kingdom, and in a corresponding degree that of the ruler, had been gradually consolidated. *Francis I.* became a suitor for England's favour, and, almost simultaneously with him, *Charles V.* (1520—1521); in the influential adviser of the King, *Thomas Wolsey*, who had early in life been promoted to the dignity of cardinal, not a few—and himself among the foremost—thought they could discern the future Pope. What bold plans were formed by the ambitious candidate, who impatiently awaited the death of *Hadrian* for the fulfilment of his wish, which nevertheless was not destined to receive its fulfilment in his favour! When the honest *Hadrian VI.*, weary of the papal dignity, died at the expiration of a single year (September, 1523), *Julius Medici* became pope, and continued to hold that office until the fatal die had

been cast in England. *Clement VII.* hesitated to declare the marriage of Henry VIII. illegal, and thereby to brand as illegitimate the cousin of the Emperor, the Princess *Mary*, who was born of this union. *Henry* felt himself strong enough to answer this delay with the resolute declaration that the power of the papal see over England was abrogated. By the renowned Act of Supremacy of the year 1534, Parliament confirmed the royal decree to the effect that the King was the only head upon earth of the Church of England. It was too late when *Paul III.*, who had just ascended the papal throne, and at once discerned all the peril for the Romish Church, sought to mend matters. The decree accorded so fully with the wishes of the King, as also with those of his people; and the English clergy themselves had approved of this decision, partly in the hope of averting by such assent what appeared to them the still greater evil of the Reformation in England: in this land the object had been attained which the popes had in vain striven to accomplish,—the union of the twofold power upon one head. For his own kingdom *Henry VIII.* was king and pope.

The accomplishment of a reformation was at first far from the thoughts of *Henry*. He had gained that which he sought. All connection with the Bishop of Rome was broken off; no Peter's pence were suffered any longer to flow into the papal treasury; all ecclesiastical cases, which till then could be disposed of only in Rome, were henceforth to be decided in England. The Church's order was changed, the Church's doctrine was left untouched by the *Fidei Defensor*. More powerful

however, than a king, than a whole clergy, is the spirit which sways an age, and impresses on it its royal seal as a mark of God. Nowhere in those days could one touch an ecclesiastical question, even though it were lying on the outermost circumference of Church politics, without being drawn into the stream of the Reformational movement, which ran through the whole Christian world. By whatever imperious and violent, nay even sanguinary measures, *Henry VIII.*, as pope-king, sought to guard his Church against the inroads of the Reformed doctrine, he was himself led to vacillate as regards their application, partly by the stress of politics, partly by the varying influence of the families from which he chose his wives in such rapid succession ; and, apart from these considerations, the Reformation forced its way in spite of everything, because it was animated by the Spirit of God, who breatheth where He listeth.

A foundation on which the Reformation could work presented itself here and there in the land. *Wyclif's* preaching, though now no longer heard for well nigh two hundred years past, had not yet entirely ceased to find an echo among the populace. The people have everywhere a wondrously faithful memory for such words. The influence of the Lollards had been driven into obscurity in the course of time, under the pressure of relentless persecution ; but now once more began to manifest itself in quarters where one would hardly suspect its existence. The people eagerly sought after the Bible ; the saying of the *Doctor Evangelicus* in particular, by which name *Wyclif* had been known, was treasured in memory by them, namely, that certainty is to be

found in Holy Scripture alone. And now they received the Bible again in their mother-tongue, and that not, as in *Wyclif's* day, in a translation from the Vulgate, but, as with the other peoples of the Reformation, drawn from the living fountain of the original language. In his exile at Antwerp the pious *Tyndale* wrought at the completion of his great work, with twofold eagerness since his faithful fellow-labourer *John Fryth* had at home died a martyr's death (1534).* Almost every ship which sailed from the Schelde to England carried the forbidden fruit on board ; and there the book passed from hand to hand, everywhere scattering the sacred seed-corn, which accomplishes that whereto it is sent. †

Strange and troublous times had fallen upon the land under the government of the imperious pope-king. Two forces were pitted against each other : on the one side the King, who would brook no opposition, and yet encountered a sharp opposition in his own conscience, which on more than one occasion he seemed to combat as his adversary ; on the other side the admonitory conscience of the people in the morning light of the Reformation, to which, however, there was as yet lacking the interpreter and leader who, in language bold and clear and outspoken, should with holy wrath maintain the

* Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (edition 1877), v., pp. 16 and 127.

† The sharp watch which was kept upon the dangerous book is shown by the fact that of the first edition of Tyndale's translation, of which three thousand copies were printed, only a single copy has hitherto been found. Compare Hardwick, *History of Christian Church during the Reformation*, p. 196.

cause of the Gospel. It thus came to pass that Protestants and Catholics were called upon to surrender their lives as martyrs at the same stake.* The most considerable influence, after the death of *Wolsey*, had been acquired by *Thomas Cranmer*, like our *Laski* in his youth a disciple of *Faber Stapulensis* and of *Erasmus*. When only forty-three years of age the gifted Humanist, who had already wedded the niece of the Nuremberg Reformer, *Osiander*, was made Archbishop of Canterbury (1532); he had been held in estimation by the King ever since 1528, when he had given his opinion in writing to the effect that the King's marriage with the brother's widow was null and void. Thus placed at the head of the English Church, *Cranmer*, by virtue of the Act of Supremacy, became primate of all England. By conviction he belonged to the party of the Reformation; but there was still lacking in him that invincible power of faith which can do all things. The face was turned towards the Reformation, but the feet were still, as it were, rooted to the ground of *Erasmus*. And yet the English Church probably owes its continued existence to the fact that, for a number of years in succession, the helm of affairs was in the hands of a person of this nature: in a rough and stormy age he proved himself master of the art of tacking and veering, and thereby preserving the vessel from running aground upon the reef of the King's disfavour. For *Cranmer* the conviction that the King was God's vicegerent, and within his kingdom the representative of Christ, was a sort of article of

* Ranke, *Englische Geschichte* (Leipsic, 1877), p. 164.

faith. The recognition of this fact places in a more favourable light many an act of otherwise doubtful aspect ; for his actions are the result not of cowardice, but of the consistent maintenance of his conviction, honourable even when we cannot share that conviction itself. He believed that a task was assigned to his king akin to that which was once, in the case of the ancient people of God, assigned to Josiah ; and deemed it a sacred duty to aid his king in this task. Not seldom he manifested a shrewd judgment in deriving a gain to the Protestant Church even from the vexatious marriage affairs of the King ; he grew not weary of extorting from the very waywardness of the King concessions in favour of his religious conviction. His nature, strongly inclining to a middle course, was able to accommodate itself to many a humour of the King ; he thus rescued and preserved to a more favourable time the cause entrusted to him.

This more favourable time dawned with the death of *Henry VIII.* (1547). England would not have been able to endure his government much longer ; the land was now called to decide whether it would belong to Protestantism or Catholicism. The hybrid form in which *Henry VIII.* would hold it bound, complying in this, it is true, with the wish of the people, could last no longer. In accordance with the will of the King, the heir-apparent to the throne was his son, *Edward VI.*, then a prince of nine years, whose birth had cost the life of his young mother, *Jane Seymour*, the King's third and dearest wife. When, immediately after the King's death, the will was opened, the choice of the sixteen men who were appointed to form the council of the

regency during the King's minority had the effect of giving the preponderance to the party favourable to the Reformation. This preponderance became still more decisive when these men proceeded almost unanimously to elect the King's uncle, the Earl of *Hertford*, who had already, in accordance with the terms of the late King's wish, been created Duke of *Somerset*,* Lord Protector of the kingdom. The principal power was now vested in the hands of two men who publicly rendered homage to the Protestant cause, and were sufficiently strong and unimpeded to be able to carry out their conviction, even in spite of the protests of the opposite party. They exerted great influence upon the King, who, far in advance of his years, willingly and with joy followed such influence. From childhood he had been instructed in these views, and his tutors belonged to the same Reformational school. Even at his coronation the Primate set forth to the boy-king the example of Josiah; like him, *Edward* was to destroy the image-worship in his kingdom, and to introduce the true worship of God. *Cranmer* himself regarded it as his sacred duty to smooth the way thereto for his youthful king.

Without delay the work was set about. The bishops who were attached to the old religion were pushed into the background, and gradually removed; new administrators occupied their place, partly such as had suffered imprisonment under the former King on account of their evangelical conviction, partly such as, in order to escape it, had fled to the Conti-

* Burnet, *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (London, without date), ii., p. 9.

nent, and had now found a hospitable asylum in Strassburg, Zurich, Geneva, and elsewhere. The thanks for the asylum granted,—not in those days everywhere willingly and freely accorded,—were rendered by the returning exiles by their obtaining the victory in their own land for those doctrines in which they had themselves been established during their banishment. The images, to the adoration of which the multitude clung as to a main article of their religion, were removed from the churches, not seldom in a rough iconoclastic fashion ; * the mass for the dead, as likewise the denial of the cup to the laity, was interdicted ; soon after the doctrine of transubstantiation also was rejected, and a visitation of the churches throughout the land was instituted. The disclosures made by this visitation were, as everywhere, extremely lamentable : the people had been retained in terrible ignorance in matters of faith ; the clergy were incapable of preaching the Gospel and shedding the light of the Word of God into the dark night of superstition. The Archbishop issued a collection of homilies, bearing on the principal matters of doctrine, to be read publicly in country places ; † in addition to this, the ablest preachers were sent to assist the Church visitors by preaching in the most diverse localities. These were only temporary expedients ; in order to effect a radical improvement, recourse must be had to more sweeping measures. It was necessary to provide a qualified teaching faculty at the Univer-

* Compare Foxe, v. 697 seq. ; mainly on his authority, Burnet, ii. 17 seq.

† Of these twelve homilies, which appeared in 1547, three are by Cranmer himself. Compare Hardwick, *Reformation*, p. 211.

sity, and to form an efficient staff of preachers. England itself could not as yet furnish these means ; on the Continent there was a readiness to come to its aid in this respect. Only a few months after the accession of *Edward*, we see men of note, like *Peter Martyr Vermigli*,* *Bernardino Ochino*,† and others, occupied in England—the former in Oxford, expounding the Word of God to the students in his clear, profound manner ; the latter, in the first instance, as preacher to the Italian fugitives in London, and engaged in a brisk literary activity in the immediate surroundings of the Archbishop.

With the successful progress of these essential innovations, the field of the wishes yet to be realised on the part of the Lord Protector and the Primate gradually widened. *Cranmer* saw the moment approaching in which the Reformation would hold its full entry into England ; he did not feel himself secure in answering the questions then pressing for decision alone or only in concert with the fellow-workers of kindred spirit in the land, and longed for the counsel and assistance of the most eminent Reformers of the Continent. The trying state of affairs abroad in consequence of the painful issue of the Smalcald war, and still more of the introduction of the Interim, seemed to the Archbishop to present a favourable opportunity for the accomplishment of his plan. He could promise a safe asylum on the hospitable shores of England to those who had been driven from house and home. Who in

* Compare Schmidt, *Peter Martyr Vermigli* (Elberf., 1858), p. 75 *seq.*

† Compare Benrath, *Bernardino Ochino* (Leipsic, 1875), p. 209 *seq.*

those days could feel any security in his labours, far as the mighty power of the Emperor extended?

Then followed on all sides invitations to come to England, in what a hearty and pressing manner is evident if we cite only a passage from a letter of *Cranmer to Bucer*, under date of 2nd October, 1548 : "In the meantime, while the storm [of the Interim] is raging, it behoves all those who cannot put out with their vessel to the open sea to betake themselves to the harbour. To you, therefore, my Bucer, our kingdom will be a most safe harbour, wherein, by the favour of God, the seeds of the true doctrine have happily begun to be sown. Come over therefore to us, and become a labourer with us in the harvest of the Lord. You will not be of less benefit to the universal Church of God, while you are with us, than if you retain your present position. Moreover, you will the better be able to heal the wounds of your distressed country [Strassburg had till then refused submission to the Interim *] than you are now able to do in person. Laying aside therefore all delay, come over to us as soon as possible."† The plan which Cranmer had before his mind in the invitation of these eminent men to England receives additional light from his letter to *A Lasco* : "We are desirous of setting forth in our Churches the true doctrine of God, and to hand down to our descendants a true and explicit form of doctrine, agreeable to the rule of Holy Scripture, thus to offer to all nations an illustrious testimony on the part of our teachers, and one supported by the grave authority

* Baum, *Capito und Butzer* (Elberf., 1860), p. 542.

† *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1846), i., p. 20.

of learned and godly men, and to afford to our posterity a pattern of doctrine which they can imitate. For the carrying of this important design into execution, we have thought it necessary to have the assistance of learned men, who, having compared their opinions together with us, may do away with all doctrinal controversies and build up a complete system [*integrum corpus*] of the true doctrine.”*

In the execution of such a far-reaching and important plan, it seems to us almost self-evident that our friend is to be enrolled among this noble band, and indeed in the foremost rank. He had within a few years accomplished a work in East Friesland such as called forth wondering admiration.† Two men, more especially, had drawn the attention of the Primate of England to *Laski*—*Peter Martyr*, who had known and learnt to esteem our friend in Strassburg, and the physician Dr. *William Turner*.‡ The latter had years before been compelled, for his faith’s sake, to leave England, and had lived during the interval at Emden, in intimate brotherly converse with *A Lasco*. Recalled by the Lord Protector in the capacity of physician-in-ordinary to the King, he took a lively part in the advancement of the Reformation, and did not fail to call attention again and again to the important

* The original in Gabbema, p. 108; an English translation in *Original Letters*, i., p. 17.

† Compare the testimony of Emmius, p. 935.

‡ Dr. William Turner, author of a treatise against the mass (1548), as of a work against Rome in 1543, was made Dean of Wells in 1550, and was again an exile in 1553. Published the first English *Herbal* (1558). Restored to his deanery 1559. Died 13th July, 1568. His funeral sermon was preached by his friend Thomas Lever. See Bishop Parkhurst’s remarks (*Zurich Letters*, i., p. 206).—TR.

power yonder in East Friesland. As early as the spring of 1548 the first inquiries came from London. These were repeated in the summer of that year, accompanied with the urgent request that he would make use of all his persuasive art to induce *Melanchthon* also to join in this work. *A Lasco* was not deficient in the force of his appeals to Wittenberg. "Since then you see, my Philip, whither and to what end you are called, and likewise with what zeal on the part of all men who love you and the true religion, I know not with what conscience you can disregard this call, specially when you consider that you have no other certain calling which you can justly oppose to this one. If you could oppose no difficulty, in the case of a like call, to the venerable old man the Bishop of Cologne, it will certainly not be permitted you now, on an occasion so much more important. I know how unwilling your friends would be, particularly at this time, to let you go thither, and with what reluctance you would leave them; but I fear that not all there listen to you as they ought."*

Melanchthon did not remove. Troublous days had indeed set in for him. The Diet of Meissen (1st July, 1548), at which he had delivered so sharp and scathing a criticism on the Interim,[†] had been followed in rapid succession by some two or three other conventions, of which the Leipsic Interim was the outcome. If he had repaired to England, his name would not have been associated with this "piece of patchwork,"[‡] to use no stronger

* Kuyper, ii. 619.

† Compare *Melanchthon*, vii. 13 seq.

‡ Schmidt, *Philip Melanchthon* (Elberf., 1861), p. 508.

expression. *A Lasco* recognised the high significance of the call to London ; the reasons with which he sought to gain over *Melanchthon* were decisive for himself. It was not an easy matter for him either, though it were but for a few months, to leave his East Friesland just at that crisis. But, at the cost of a heavy sacrifice, he acquired an influence upon the development of the Church of England which is felt to the present day. For a man of his broad and liberal views with regard to the whole Church of Christ, this sacrifice was not too great.

Cranmer and the Lord Protector sought to be aided with counsel ; this counsel Wittenberg refused in the most decisive hour. We cannot then wonder that the doctrine of the Church of England has received an impress which does not originate in the school of *Luther*. It might still have acquired a Lutheran impress at this time, perhaps, with a glance at the preliminary negotiations of the year 1538, we ought rather to say, have *renewed* and *preserved* it.

I. FIRST RESIDENCE IN ENGLAND.

Three days after the arrival of the imperial messenger in Emden, at the end of August, 1548, *A Lasco*, with the consent of the Countess, quitted East Friesland. The journey was a perilous one ; everywhere the imperial bailiffs were on the watch to seize the prominent leaders of the Protestants ; and *A Lasco* in particular would have been a welcome booty to them. He had, moreover, to pursue his route through hostile territory. While the Emperor had already begun to hold his court

in Brussels, our Pole, in disguise and under an assumed name, rode through Holland, Brabant, Flanders. No one recognised him ; without molestation he was suffered to reach the sea at Calais,* then still in the possession of the English. Here one could always depend on finding a ship bound for the coast of England. In the beginning of September our friend arrived safely in London.

Laski found already present on his arrival a captivating circle of kindred minds from the Continent, a circle enlarging from week to week, all animated with the earnest wish of assisting with counsel and action the Archbishop and the like-minded men of England in their great work of reformation. In Oxford *Peter Martyr* had already been labouring almost a year with marked success, and simultaneously with him *Ochino* had arrived (20th December, 1547) ; he had been made Prebendary of Canterbury, and found work among his numerous countrymen, fugitives from Italy.†

Later on we find *Bucer* and his congenial fellow-labourer *Paul Fagius* the guests of *Cranmer*. Pending the commencement of their university lectures at Cambridge, they were zealously occupied in rendering the sacred Scriptures out of the original text into the Latin language.‡ *Franzisco*

* On the fall of Calais, 5th January, 1558, compare, among others, the letter of Sir Anthony Cooke (from Strassburg) to *Peter Martyr* (*Original Letters*, i., p. 139).—TR.

† On the 17th July and 23rd and 31st December, 1548, *Ochino* wrote, on behalf of the Archbishop, to urge upon *Wolfgang Musculus* the duty of coming to England. *Musculus* wrote back from Berne declining the invitation, “unless there should not be an opportunity of serving Christ in Germany” (*Original Letters*, p. 337). He remained at Berne until his death in 1563, without being able to return to Augsburg.—TR.

‡ Compare *Cranmer*, p. 423 (ii., p. 149, of the *Ecclesiastical*

de Enzinas (Dryander) had likewise come to England, on the warm recommendation of *Melanchthon*, and soon afterwards the old intimacy of the Louvain days was renewed with *A Lasco*.* The Protestant Spaniard had been compelled to lead a restless life during a period of ten years; he had already contemplated retiring into Turkey, to find somewhere in that land greater tolerance than in the wide domains of imperial Spain.† Shortly before his departure for England he had espoused *Margaret Elter* in Basle—a choice on which *Laski* heartily congratulates him.‡ We also meet in London with two other forms from the Continent, whose lives become henceforth intimately bound up with *Laski's* fate. First of all *John Uttenhove*,§ a

History Society's edition, Oxford, 1848): “Fagius entered upon the evangelical prophet Esaias, and Bucer upon the Gospel of the Evangelist John.” They were “to give a clear, plain, and succinct interpretation of the Scripture, according to the propriety of the language,” and “illustrate difficult and obscure places, and reconcile those that seemed repugnant to one another.” Strype relates this on the authority of the *Historia Vera de Vita*, etc., *D. Martini Buceri et Pauli Fagii*, published at Strassburg in 1562. A similar work was that of Peter Martyr, as we see, e.g., from his lectures on the *Book of Judges*, of which the dedication bears date Zurich, 22nd December, 1560.—TR.

* Kuyper, ii. 619.

† Böhmer, i. 151.

‡ On 25th April, 1549, Bucer and Fagius found at Lambeth Palace Dryander and Imman. Tremellius (who succeeded Fagius at Cambridge), as also Peter Martyr, his wife, and Julius Terentius, with several French Protestants (*Original Letters*, p. 535). Dryander was settled at Cambridge March, 1549 (*Original Letters*, p. 348), but towards the end of the year in disappointment left England for Basle (p. 463), where he was rejoined by his wife during the last days of May, 1550 (*Ibid.*, p. 562). It was already the beginning of the end with Enzinas.—TR.

§ Uttenhove came over to London or Canterbury in the summer of this year, 1548 (Pijper, *Jan Uttenhove*, p. 28).

name with which we are already familiar, scion of an ancient and honourable family in Ghent, a half-brother of that *Charles* whom *A Lasco* had learnt to know and love in the house of *Erasmus*, and with whom he had made the journey to Upper Italy.* John had been early won over to the cause of the Gospel ; with this change his native land had been closed against him (from the year 1544).† Engaged as he is upon a multiplicity of journeys, his scarce discernible form is descried now in Switzerland, now among the Strassburgers ; from the present moment, however, we see him as a most faithful companion in the suite of *Laski*. And then, on the warm recommendation of the citizen of Ghent, a call to England was given to *Valérand Poullain*, a nobleman of Lille, who had become attached to the cause of the Reformation and taken up the study of theology. *Ochino* had been active as a pastor among his countrymen in London, and so now was *Poullain* among those French who had quitted their native land in order to live agreeably to their faith in the asylum readily opened to them on the banks of the Thames. On the side of the two wives, Enzinas and Poullain were nearly connected.‡ These are only the more prominent names in that evangelical brotherhood whom the English archbishop had called around him—a goodly assemblage gathered out of almost all lands : from Germany, Poland, Spain, France, Belgium, and Switzerland ; possessing in the mother-tongue of the learned a convenient medium for the interchange of thought,

* Compare p. 136.

† *Calendar. Domestic. State Papers* (London, 1861), p. 144.

‡ Böhmer, *Bibliotheca Wisseniana*, i., p. 151.

but in the Gospel the fair home-land in virtue of which they recognised each other as brothers and of one family in the faith. They had almost all left their country on account of their confession ; many of them were fugitives from the powerful wrath of the Romish emperor, here, however, in the sanctuary accorded them, ready to do their best in order to impart to their youngest evangelical sister the meet blessing for the baptism of fire. This baptism was very soon to approach, after hardly more than a lustrum ; but their blessing has remained, and to the present hour the characteristic mark of those men from abroad is still recognisable upon the Evangelical Church of England, inasmuch as it is her sacred delight to preach the Gospel to all the world.

When *A Lasco* arrived in England, *Cranmer* was for the moment absent from London. *A Lasco* awaited him at his palace, during the first days still a little uncertain what he had to expect from the Archbishop with regard to the ordering of the Church. "But it is in itself a great thing at this time to be assured of an asylum where we can live ourselves, together with those whom the bond of the same Spirit unites with us in the Lord, in the confession of our faith."* One traces in these earnest lines from England the lively satisfaction of now standing in safety upon a coast on which the high-running surge of the Interim does not beat. After a few days the Primate of England reached home, and hospitably received the nephew of the former Primate of Poland in his residence at

* Kuyper, ii. 620.

Lambeth. *A Lasco* remained his guest during a stay of nearly eight months in England, and an intimate friendship soon sprang up between the two men. Looking back at the time of their fellowship, *Cranmer* afterwards testifies to *Melanchthon* that during all these months he had lived upon the most familiar and loving terms with this most excellent man *John a Lasco*.* These two distinguished persons possessed many intellectual points of contact. Once they had been brought, in virtue of these qualities, into intimate association, it could not be otherwise than that *Laski* should exert an influence upon the Archbishop. *Cranmer* was indeed the senior by ten years (born 1489); his position, too, in the State and in the Church far eclipsed the more modest one of the Reformer of East Friesland. But *A Lasco* was the man of stronger and more inflexible character; he stood more firmly rooted in his evangelical conviction, which he had preserved pure, and sealed at the heavy cost of banishment from his fatherland; by merely human considerations he never suffered himself to be influenced, free as he was in his Lord alone; a man of immovable courage, he lived out his conviction without the fear of men, careless in his firm reliance upon his God, and animated by an ardent impulse to seek, as in a sacred service of the Lord, to give effect to this conviction. *Henry VIII.* would not long have hesitated about impressing the seal of martyrdom upon such a person. Moreover, the East Frisian Reformer had, though, it is true,

* *Cranmer, Miscellaneous Writings* of (Parker Society, 1846), p. 425: "Johannes a Lasco, vir optimus, mecum hosce aliquod menses conjunctissime et amantissime vixit."

within a narrower compass, approved himself in a work—and gained abundant experience in its execution—of a nature such as that which Cranmer would just then undertake for England. In this work the Archbishop sought coadjutors.

Proofs are at hand that the support given by Laski to the Primate was widely felt, within even a few months of his coming. A letter from England by a Swiss, *Johann von Eschen* (Ab Ulmis, afterwards minister at Zurich), bearing date of 18th August, 1548, relates that the Archbishop has become sluggish, and the Protestants are greatly disappointed in their expectations. As an evidence he adduces the translation of a Catechism, which has appeared under Cranmer's name, wherein very perilous concessions to the Romish Church are to be met with.* Somewhat over four months afterwards the same

* The title of this Catechism is, *A Short Instruction into the Christian Religion, for the Syngular Commodity and Profite of Children and Young People*. The so called Brandenburg-Nuremberg Catechism, which Justus Jonas translated into Latin in 1529, forms the basis of this work of Cranmer's. In his reply to Gardiner (September, 1551), he was compelled to explain that when he said, "We receive the body and blood of Christ," in the administration of the Supper, the word "spiritually" is to be understood. See Cranmer's *Answer to a Crafty and Sophistical Cavillation*, p. 227 and elsewhere. Compare Hardwick, *Reformation*, 4th edition, p. 207 seq.; Strype's *Cranmer* (Oxford, 1848), ii. p. 47, note m. (The matter is fully discussed in the original work of Dalton.) The hasty and magisterial judgment of Ab Ulmis reads, "I would have you know for certain, that this Thomas has fallen into so heavy a slumber, that we entertain but a very cold hope that he will be aroused even by your [Bullinger's] most learned letter. For he has lately published a Catechism in which he not only approved that foul and sacrilegious transubstantiation of the Papists in the holy supper of our Saviour, but all the dreams of Luther seem to him sufficiently well grounded, perspicuous, and lucid" (*Original Letters*, p. 381).

writer joyfully reports to his friends at home that England is making vigorous steps in advance. "Thomas [Cranmer] himself"—so the writer continues—"is in a great measure recovered from his dangerous lethargy, by the goodness of God and the instrumentality of that most upright and judicious man Master John a Lasco."* Other contemporaries too were struck with the change in Cranmer's views during this winter (1548-49).† English investigators are inclined to attribute this remarkable change to the influence of Dr. Ridley, then Bishop of Rochester. Far be it from us to wish to detract aught, even in this respect, from the eminent merits of this towering leader of the Reformation in England; but so long as actual facts are not adduced in support of this view, there is surely a greater degree of probability in favour of the judgment that the main influence was exerted by *A Lasco* upon the Primate of England. Why are we to suppose that the Bishop of Rochester exerted this influence precisely in those months during which Laski was the daily and intimate companion of the Archbishop at Lambeth? ‡ Many Englishmen of the present day

* *Original Letters*, p. 383. The letter is addressed to Bullinger.

† Hardwick, *History of the Christian Church during the Reformation*, edition 1865, p. 215. See the remarkable letter of Traheron to Bullinger, December 31st, 1548; *Original Letters*, p. 323.

‡ From foreign parts also there came letters urging the lingering Archbishop to greater zeal. I am disposed to assign to this period the letter of Calvin to Cranmer (*Calvin*, xxiii. 632) to which no date is affixed; the three years there specified are not necessarily to be restricted to the time of the accession of Edward VI., and admit of our taking the year 1545 as the time *a quo*. Compare Froude, *History of England*, iv. 196 seq.

may be indisposed to recognise the labours of the foreigner and their influence upon the shaping of the Church of their native land ; and thence arises the wish to reduce them to very modest dimensions ; but in those great days of the Reformation they did not as yet apply the narrow limits of nationality to the domain of the Church. The revival of the sciences, the study of the learned languages, had enlarged their range of vision, and opened to the learned a common intellectual fatherland ; the frontiers of this home domain were deepened and enlarged by the Reformation, which encompassed the most diverse peoples with an intimate bond of brotherhood.

The winter which *A Lasco* spent in the palace at Lambeth, at the centre of the spiritual movement, was a very important one for the progress of the Reformation in England. As early as the preceding spring a lively discussion had arisen with regard to the Supper.* Not long before *Laski's* arrival *Calvin* had addressed a few letters to the Lord Protector, the Duke of Somerset, inciting him to the reformation of the Church of England. He had just (25th July) dedicated to Somerset his *Commentary on the Epistles to Timothy*.† In November Parliament met. *Cranmer* was able to submit to the judgment of the House a Book of Common Prayer, whereby the Latin prayers were to be abolished in the English Church, and the Church's doctrine laid down. "Parliament now discussed the faith of England, and laymen decided on the doctrines which the clergy were compelled to teach."‡

* Kuyper, ii. 616.

† *Calvin*, xiii. 18.

‡ Froude, iv. 382. The earliest title of this Prayer Book

The work was the fruit of long and mature deliberations. A considerable time before this, a commission of sixteen bishops, supported by six laymen, had been assembled, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York at their head, to submit the various orders of service in the land to an examination, and out of these to frame a new and suitable order of worship.* The sittings were held at Windsor.† The foreign theologians took no direct part in these important labours; we have unfortunately not been able to meet with any document from which to infer whether and to what extent our friend took an indirect part in these preliminary deliberations. From some hurried lines to *Calvin* we can only infer that *Laski* was present with *Cranmer* at Windsor, although confined to his bed with a severe illness.‡

Thus living constantly in the immediate vicinity of the Archbishop, our *Laski* had abundant opportunity of mingling on terms of friendship and intimacy with the leading men of the evangelical party. With unfeigned respect and recognition the man was received, of whom it was known that at home he had resigned the highest posts in the Church for the Gospel's sake, and whose brilliant administration in East Friesland was manifest to

reads thus: *The Booke of the Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacramentes and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Churche, after the Use of the Churche of England. Londini in officina Edouardi Whitchurche. Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum. Anno dom. 1549, Mense Maii.* Compare *Two Liturgies* (Cambridge, 1845), p. 10 seq.

* Compare Burnet, ii. 98 seq., and iv. 272 seq.

† Burnet, ii. 204.

‡ Kuyper, ii. 620. This editor has rightly corrected the *Vomsor ia* of the original into *Windsorice*.

all. When the celebrated *Hugh Latimer* delivered his third sermon before the young King, on the 22nd March, 1549, he made mention in it of *Laski* also : "Johannes a Lasco was here, a great learned man, and, as they say, a nobleman in his country, and is gone his way again. . . . I would wish such men as he to be in the realm, for the realm should prosper in receiving of them. 'Who receiveth you receiveth Me,' saith Christ; and it should be for the King's honour to receive them and keep them."* A few names to whom *Laski* sends salutations upon his return introduce us in some measure to the circle of his English friends. The letter is addressed to *William Cecil*, who at the age of twenty-seven was made private secretary to the Lord Protector. *Laski* seems to have held much and familiar converse with him; his negotiations in the interest of the Germanic Confederation were carried on with the Duke of Somerset, through the intervention of *Cranmer* and *Cecil*.† He sends also his salutations to *Cecil's* wife. The young secretary had already wedded as his second wife Mildred, eldest daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke.‡ In the house of *Cecil*, *Laski* had also formed the acquaintance of Sir John Cheke, *Cecil's* brother-in-law by the first marriage, who, with Sir Anthony Cooke, was tutor to the young King. Both of these men were warmly attached to the cause of the Reformation.§

* *Sermons*, p. 141. The sermon is among those preached before the King during the Fridays of Lent, 1549.

† Kuyper, ii. 621.

‡ Froude, iv. 344. Her younger sister Anne was the mother of the renowned Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam.

§ For some interesting letters of the two men, though belonging to subsequent years, see *Original Letters*, pp.

Mention is likewise made of *Sir Richard Morison*. He was just about this time one of the King's visitors, six in number, who attended at the Oxford disputation between *Peter Martyr* and *Dr. William Tresham* on the subject of the Lord's Supper (May 28th, 1549).* Laski also associated much with the celebrated *Dr. William Turner*, who had learnt to esteem him at Emden, and had mainly contributed to his call to England.

The leave of absence granted to *A Lasco* had expired in the spring of 1549. *Cranmer*, and with him the great circle of friends gained in England, pressed him to remain, and not afresh to exchange the quiet haven, where so abundant a field of labour was opening to him, for the storm outside upon the rough swelling sea. But at present he felt himself impelled with force back to the Church entrusted to his oversight. The hour of decision was approaching ; it was to find him well equipped upon the field.

In the middle of March *A Lasco* quitted London. After an exceedingly good passage, the ship safely entered the mouth of the Ems, on the third day after sailing from the English coast. His fellow-passenger was Count *Mansfeld*, who was conducting the negotiations with the Lord Protector for the accession of England to the Germanic Confederation.

139—147. [Seven original letters of Sir John Cheke are also appended by Goodwin to his edition of Cheke's MS. translation of St. Matthew's Gospel (Cambridge, 1843).—Tr.]

* Schmidt, *Peter Martyr*, p. 92; and Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, vi. 298 seq. [Bucer wrote to John Brentz in May, 1550, expressing his dissent from Martyr's teaching on this subject (*Original Letters*, p. 544). This letter goes far to explain the subsequent hostility towards the fugitive congregations on the part of Brentz.—Tr.]

It was on his account indeed that Somerset provided an able and experienced captain, who further conveyed the Count from Emden to Bremen.*

2. SECOND RESIDENCE IN ENGLAND.

On the 13th of May, 1550, our friend arrived again in London, after an interval of about a year from the time of his quitting the English shore.† The voyage was by no means so favourable a one as the return voyage from England in the previous year. Thrice had the ship put off from Hamburg, and thrice was it constrained to return, hardly reaching the high sea before it was driven by terrible storms to make in all haste for the sheltering haven. A fresh cause of delay arose from an attack of *Laski's* old trouble the ague, which thoroughly prostrated him, and thus brought about his involuntary detention for a couple of weeks or more at Hamburg. But this trouble was soon forgotten : his arrival had been long awaited, and he was now received with open arms. “ His coming gave great joy to all godly persons ; ” thus we read in a letter of those days.‡ He once more took up his temporary quarters, for the space of six or eight weeks,

* Kuyper, ii. 62.

† *Original Letters*, pp. 187, 560.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 560. [“ A Lasco arrived in England on the 13th of May.” In a letter dated 28th May, eight days later than the one from which the above extract is made, Micronius gives us the first indication of A Lasco’s presence : “ The illustrious lord A Lasco told me, four days since, that he had learned for certain that the Spanish fleet had been dispersed and destroyed by a storm, and that this circumstance had detained the Emperor in Lower Germany ” (p. 563). Micronius himself had come over to England with Hooper in May of the previous year.—TR.]

in the hospitable palace of Lambeth, with his friend the Archbishop of Canterbury.*

It is with a keen sense of regret that we lay down the pen at the point of *A Lasco's* settlement in England. We had purposed before closing to describe his ever-memorable work in London and to trace the influence of his Church Order upon the after-history of the Reformed Church in Britain, Germany, and Holland. The dimensions of the present work render a satisfactory account of these labours for the time being impossible.

Hereafter it may be our privilege to present to the English reader, in a volume of no less interest, if of somewhat smaller compass, the fruits of his matured experience in the organisation of the Church of the Foreigners at Austin Friars, London, in connection with which account many other noble forms will emerge from the obscurity of a long-vanished past. We propose to relate the history of the dispersion of his beloved congregations on the accession of Queen Mary, and to interweave therewith a brief narrative of the sufferings of many of our own countrymen, while more particularly following the course of the fugitive strangers

* In a very interesting letter from Martyr to Bullinger, dated Oxford, 1st June, 1550, we read (after some encomiums on Hooper and Coverdale), "Master a Lasco also has repaired hither, since his Phrygia has admitted the Imperial Interim; and, as I suspect (*utque olfacio*), will be placed over the Church of the Germans in London, which is mightily agreeable to me. He is staying at present with the Primate (apud D. Cantuariensem)." The original letter, transcribed from the Zurich MSS., was furnished by Burnet in his *Appendix*, as also in *Epistole Tigurinae* (Cantab., 1848). English in *Original Letters*, p. 483.—TR.

amidst their severe privations in Denmark and North Germany and watching their career until a friendly asylum once more opens to them in Emden.

Such volume would also embrace the history of *A Lasco* and his faithful Utenuove in their labours for the reformation of Poland, down to the death of the former on the 8th of January, 1560. It would, moreover, glance at the subsequent triumph of his principles in that land by the subscribing of the Treaty of Sendomir (1570). Meanwhile the contribution to his history, already placed before the reader, may suffice to embalm in loving esteem the memory of one who laboured with such precious results on our own shores, and who was faithful unto death in the service of his Lord for the well-being of His Church.

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